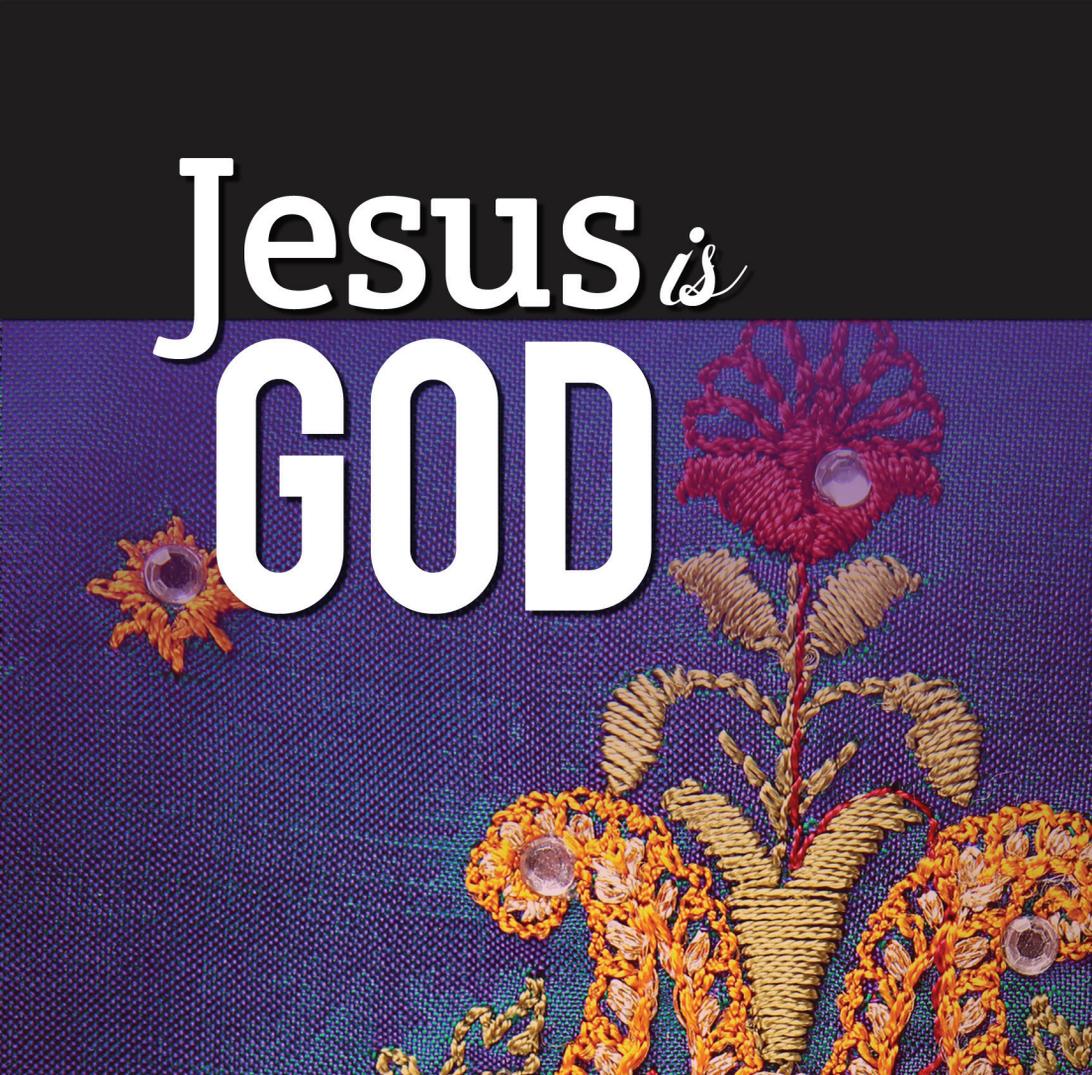
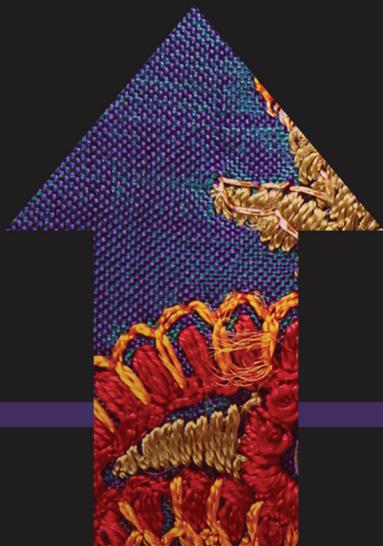


# Jesus *is* GOD

A close-up photograph of a piece of blue fabric with intricate embroidery. The embroidery features several flowers in shades of red, orange, and yellow, with detailed stitching for the petals and stems. Some flowers have small, clear, circular beads or sequins in their centers. The background fabric has a fine, woven texture.A large, stylized arrow pointing upwards, filled with the same blue fabric and embroidered floral pattern seen in the top section. The arrow is positioned on the left side of the lower half of the cover.

True  
Path  
*to*  
God

7

by Dr. Kuldip Singh Gangar



Jesus *is*  
GOD

Dr. Kuldip Singh Gangar

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All scripture quotations are from the Authorized King James Version of the Bible unless otherwise noted.

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# INTRODUCTION

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The deity of Jesus Christ determines whether Christianity is founded by God or is like other religions which had human founders only. The Jehovah Witnesses teach that Jesus is not God. Men and women all over the world worship Him and pray to Him. If Jesus is not God as Jehovah Witnesses teach then Christians are guilty of blasphemy and idolatry. The Jehovah Witnesses teach that Jesus is “a god” who was created by God through whom God made the world. Jesus according to them pre-existed before all creation, but is nevertheless a creature. In holding this they declare themselves to be *polytheists* for now they have more than one God, even though it is a lesser deity.

If Jesus is not God, then if we still teach salvation by Jesus Christ, we would owe our salvation to a creature rather than the Creator. Donald Macleod sums it up well when he writes:

If Christ were not God, he could not be the revelation of God. If Christ were not God, men had not been redeemed by God. If Christ were not God, believers were not united to God. Above all, if Christ were not God, Christians had no right to worship him. Indeed, if

they did so, they were reverting to pagan superstition and idolatry.<sup>1</sup>

The deity of Jesus Christ is important because this alone provides a true explanation of all that the New Testament says of Him. A mere man uttering the things Jesus uttered would not give Him a place with the greats of the world, but assign Him a place with the lunatic fringe. The proofs of His deity are not found in isolated texts of Scripture but are evident on its surface. Let us look at the evidences for the deity of Jesus Christ.

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1 Donald Macleod, *The Person of Christ* (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 1998), 123.

# 1

## JESUS IS GIVEN DIVINE TITLES THAT APPLY TO GOD ALONE

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John 1:1 In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God.<sup>2</sup> The same was in the beginning with God.<sup>3</sup> All things were made by him; and without him was not any thing made that was made.

**F**irst Jesus is given the title **God**. John tells us that Jesus who is called the “Word” here existed before creation. He did not have a beginning but was always with God, that is, He enjoyed an intimate relationship with the Father. The Word was God. Jehovah Witnesses point out that the word “God” here does not have a definite article so should be translated “a god”. Greek grammar requires that the article appear before the noun (Word) and the predicate which tells what the Word is should be without it. The Jehovah Witnesses translate it by “God” in places where the article does not appear (see John 1:12, 18).

An objection may be raised that others are called “gods” in Scripture and that does not make them divine. For example in Psalm 82:6 judges are called “gods” but the verse also goes on to say that they shall die like men. Moses is called a “god” in relation to Pharaoh but it is quite clear that the word is used in a figurative sense. No Jew ever acknowledged that Moses was God or in any way divine.

In John 1:18 we read “No one has ever seen God, but God only-begotten who has declared Him”. This is the true reading according to the earliest Greek manuscript. Only God could reveal God. In other religions men tell us about God but cannot really reveal God, for they are but men. Jesus is God and therefore can reveal Him.

Romans 9:5 Whose *are* the fathers, and of whom as concerning the flesh Christ *came*, who is over all, God blessed for ever. Amen.

In Romans 9 Paul is discussing the privileges of the Jews. The greatest blessing is that from them comes Jesus Christ as to His flesh. In another translation the force of the Greek is better captured, “Theirs are the patriarchs, and from them is traced the human ancestry of Christ, who is God over all, forever praised!” (New International Version). Some try to evade this by saying it is a doxology to God and is not speaking about Jesus. The fact is the church fathers who understood Greek much better read it the way the NIV reads it; and secondly when Paul has a doxology to God the word blessed is found at the beginning, not as here towards the end.<sup>2</sup>

Hebrews 1:8 But unto the Son *he saith*, Thy throne, O God, *is* for ever and ever: a sceptre of righteousness *is* the sceptre of thy kingdom.

The writer of Hebrews shows how Jesus is greater than the angels. He is alluding to Psalm 45:6 which refers to the Messiah. Jesus is the one addressed by God according to the inspired interpretation of that Psalm and according to the writer of Hebrews. In fact all the angels are to worship the Son (Hebrews 1:6), who if He is not God, would be idolatry.

Titus 2:13 is rightly translated according to the rules of Greek grammar as, “we wait for the blessed hope—the glorious appearing of our great

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2 Donald Macleod, *A Faith to Live By* (Geanies House, Fearn Ross-shire: Christian Focus Publications, 2002), 41.

God and Savior, Jesus Christ, who gave himself for us". In this verse Jesus is described as both God and Savior. The verse is not speaking about two persons but only one. The scripture nowhere speaks about God the Father appearing at the end of time but we are expecting the appearance of Jesus Christ. A similar construction appears in 2 Peter 1:1 where it should be properly translated "through the righteousness of our God and Savior Jesus Christ" (NIV) as referring only to Jesus Christ and not to two persons.

After Jesus Christ had risen from the dead He appeared to his disciples. Thomas, one of the twelve, was not there. He was adamant that he would not believe unless he saw Him in person and saw the wounds in his hands. Jesus appeared and asked Thomas to examine and see, and no longer doubt but believe. Thomas responded with these words of worship and praise:

John 20:27 Then saith he to Thomas, Reach hither thy finger, and behold my hands; and reach hither thy hand, and thrust *it* into my side: and be not faithless, but believing.<sup>28</sup> And Thomas answered and said unto him, My Lord and my God.<sup>29</sup> Jesus saith unto him, Thomas, because thou hast seen me, thou hast believed: blessed *are* they that have not seen, and *yet* have believed.

Some have tried to evade the force of this by saying that Thomas was really addressing God. But the text clearly tells us that he said unto Him, namely Jesus, who stood there. Others think it was like saying "O my God" but no Jew would ever have used language that way, since they regarded the name of God as sacred. Thomas was forced to recognize that the man who recently was put to death, and now standing before him was no other than God and Lord.

Secondly, Jesus is called **Lord**. We may not fully appreciate this title, because it can be used of humans to simply mean master. However the Greek word for Lord was the word used by those who translated

the Old Testament Hebrew into the Greek for the name Yahweh, the sacred name for God in the Old Testament. The word “Lord” is a divine title. The highest title the Roman Emperors could take to themselves was this title of “Lord”. In Greek culture it was a divine title.<sup>3</sup> This title is regularly applied to Jesus Christ by his followers. Let me give a few examples. We have already seen how Thomas addressed Him as “My Lord and my God”.

**1 Corinthians 8:4** As concerning therefore the eating of those things that are offered in sacrifice unto idols, we know that an idol *is* nothing in the world, and that *there is* none other God but one.<sup>5</sup> For though there be that are called gods, whether in heaven or in earth, (as there be gods many, and lords many,)<sup>6</sup> 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.

Paul who is a monotheist is not teaching that there are two Gods, but one God who is both Father as well as the Person of Jesus Christ. This is the case because each Person of the godhead shares the same nature (see a previous booklet on the Trinity). This becomes clear when we realize he gives Jesus Christ the title Lord which is to say Yahweh. Remember it is Paul who was a former Jewish rabbi, who knew the Old Testament well and was zealous for the Jewish faith, so that he once persecuted the church.

**Philippians 2:9** Wherefore God also hath highly exalted him, and given him a name which is above every name:<sup>10</sup> That at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, of *things* in heaven, and *things* in earth, and *things* under the earth;<sup>11</sup> And *that* every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ *is* Lord, to the glory of God the Father.

“What Paul actually said was not that God gave Him a name, but that God gave Him *the* name: the name above every name. Now there is only one name that can qualify for such a description: the name

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3 Donald Macleod, *A Faith to Live By*, 44.

*Jehovah.*"<sup>4</sup> The words in verse 10 are taken from Isaiah 45:23 where they apply to Yahweh, so Jesus is Yahweh and so receives worship that is appropriate to deity.

Isaiah 6:3 And one cried unto another, and said, Holy, holy, holy, is the LORD of hosts: the whole earth is full of his glory.

John 12:41 These things said Esaias, when he saw his glory, and spake of him.

In the above text from Isaiah 6 we have an account of Isaiah's vision in which he saw the Lord exalted on His throne and the seraphim (angels) adoring Him with these words. This address of the seraphim is to Yahweh. Our English translation puts the translation of Yahweh by using all capitals as LORD. The amazing thing is that the apostle John says these words were spoken about Jesus Christ! Isaiah saw the glory of Christ, when he saw Yahweh in the temple that day. Jesus is clearly the Yahweh of the Old Testament.

Isaiah 40:3 The voice of him that crieth in the wilderness, Prepare ye the way of the LORD, make straight in the desert a highway for our God.

Here in Isaiah 40 we have a prophecy of the coming of Yahweh to rescue His people. The day will be preceded by a prophet who will prepare the way of Yahweh (LORD). Yet when we turn to the New Testament we read in the Gospel of Matthew the following:

Matthew 3:1 In those days came John the Baptist, preaching in the wilderness of Judaea,

Matthew 3:3 For this is he that was spoken of by the prophet Esaias, saying, The voice of one crying in the wilderness, Prepare ye the way of the Lord, make his paths straight.

You notice the words of Isaiah 40 are seen as being fulfilled in John the Baptist who is preparing the way for Jesus Christ! Jesus is the Yahweh of the Old Testament who has come to rescue His people. The words

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4 Donald Macleod, *A Faith to Live By*, 46.

of Zacharias, the father of John the Baptist concerning his son, fit with this interpretation:

Luke 1:17 And he shall go before him in the spirit and power of Elias, to turn the hearts of the fathers to the children, and the disobedient to the wisdom of the just; to make ready a people prepared for the Lord.

It is quite clear that no one would ever think of applying such titles to Moses or Elisha or David. Yet the astonishing thing is that these divine titles are applied not to one who was a warrior like David, but one who was humiliated and hung upon a cross! Jesus' divinity was evident in His self-sacrifice for the sins of His people and His triumph over death. These titles were given by those who were strict monotheists, yet they saw no conflict with calling Jesus God and Lord.

# 2

## JESUS IS GIVEN DIVINE PERFECTIONS THAT APPLY TO GOD ALONE

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First, Jesus is described as **eternal**. He is one who has always existed and will always be. John literally says of Him that He “in the beginning with God” (John 1:1). He shared glory with God the Father before the world was (John 17:5). Jesus is not one who came into existence and will always exist, for that is true of humans and angels, but One who unlike them had no beginning as the Son of God. In the book of Revelation we read the following descriptions of Jesus:

Revelation 1:17 And when I saw him, I fell at his feet as dead. And he laid his right hand upon me, saying unto me, Fear not; I am the first and the last:

Revelation 1:18 I am he that liveth, and was dead; and, behold, I am alive for evermore, Amen; and have the keys of hell and of death.

Revelation 22:13 I am Alpha and Omega, the beginning and the end, the first and the last.

Note here how Jesus is described as the “first and the last” and as “Alpha and Omega” which are the first and last letters of the Greek alphabet - the beginning and the end. These titles are inappropriate of any creature, which has a beginning and is only kept in being by God. These titles are applied to Yahweh in the Old Testament:

Isaiah 41:4 Who hath wrought and done *it*, calling the generations from the beginning? I the LORD, the first, and with the last; I am he.

Isaiah 44:6 Thus saith the LORD the King of Israel, and his redeemer the LORD of hosts; I *am* the first, and I *am* the last; and beside me *there is* no God.

Isaiah 48:12 Hearken unto me, O Jacob and Israel, my called; I *am* he; I *am* the first, I also *am* the last.

It would be blasphemy for Jesus Christ to assume such titles to Himself if He was not equal to the Father, and Himself God. One passage which speaks about the Messiah's birth, as well as the fact that He existed from all eternity, is found in Micah 5:2:

Micah 5:2 But thou, Bethlehem Ephrathah, *though* thou be little among the thousands of Judah, *yet* out of thee shall he come forth unto me *that is* to be ruler in Israel; whose goings forth *have been* from of old, from everlasting.

Here it is quite clear that it is a reference to the birth of Jesus Christ in Bethlehem. Yet Micah states that this One coming into the world is One whose goings forth have been from everlasting. The only way it could be so, is if this one existed prior to His assuming our human nature as the Son of God. This truth is borne out when we read the prophecy of Isaiah concerning this child:

Isaiah 9:6 For unto us a child is born, unto us a son is given: and the government shall be upon his shoulder: and his name shall be called Wonderful, Counsellor, The mighty God, The everlasting Father, The Prince of Peace.

On the one hand, the child is born at a certain time in history, but on the other, a son is given, for He existed as the Son of God before He was given. This child is then given divine titles for He is from eternity, and so called "The everlasting Father". The Son existed in the bosom of the Father from all eternity, and so rightly can be described by the titles given by the prophet here.

Secondly Jesus is said to be **omnipresent**. Jesus Christ is speaking to Nicodemus about the necessity of the new birth in order to enter

the Kingdom of Heaven. Nicodemus, a Jewish ruler, is amazed over this teaching to which Jesus replies, “Verily, verily, I say unto thee, we speak that we do know, and testify that we have seen; and ye receive not our witness. If I have told you earthly things, and ye believe me not, how shall ye believe if I tell you of heavenly things?” (John 3:11-12). Jesus then goes on to make an astounding statement that reveals His omnipresence:

John 3:13 And no man hath ascended up to heaven, but he that came down from heaven, *even* the Son of man which is in heaven.

Jesus is not affirming that He had ascended up to heaven, but merely that no man had. Jesus is teaching that no man is qualified to give such teaching, but one who has immediate communion with God, and being omnipresent, Jesus has that knowledge. It was not that He “was” in heaven, but that He “is” in heaven while speaking to Nicodemus, since as God He is present everywhere.

Matthew 28:20 Teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you: and, lo, I am with you *always, even* unto the end of the world. Amen.

The above words are spoken after Jesus’ resurrection and before His ascension to heaven. He commissions His disciples and promises both them and those who will come after, His presence to the end of the world. These words make no sense coming from one who is limited by space and time, but they make perfect sense from One who is God and therefore present in every place.

Thirdly Jesus is **omniscient**. Peter the apostle had denied Jesus Christ three times. Now after the resurrection Jesus meets with Peter on the shore of Galilee and puts the question to him, “Simon, son of Jonah, do you love Me?” The third time the question is put to Peter, he responds with these words:

John 21:17 He saith unto him the third time, Simon, *son* of Jonas, lovest thou me? Peter was grieved because he said unto him the third time, Lovest thou me? And he said unto him, Lord, thou knowest all things; thou knowest that I love thee. Jesus saith unto him, Feed my sheep.

Peter here appeals to His Lord's omniscience as One who can search the hearts of men. Peter is saying, Lord you know all things. Nothing is concealed from You for You are God.

Our Lord has been preaching and few have believed His message and as He gathers with His disciples He utters this prayer:

Matthew 11:25 At that time Jesus answered and said, I thank thee, O Father, Lord of heaven and earth, because thou hast hid these things from the wise and prudent, and hast revealed them unto babes.<sup>26</sup> Even so, Father: for so it seemed good in thy sight.<sup>27</sup> All things are delivered unto me of my Father: and no man knoweth the Son, but the Father; neither knoweth any man the Father, save the Son, and *he* to whomsoever the Son will reveal *him*.<sup>28</sup> Come unto me, all *ye* that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest.<sup>29</sup> Take my yoke upon you, and learn of me; for I am meek and lowly in heart: and ye shall find rest unto your souls.<sup>30</sup> For my yoke *is* easy, and my burden is light.

In verse 27 note that something is said about Jesus which would not be true unless He is God. If He was a mere man surely others could know Him. Since Jesus is God, the only One who can fully comprehend Him is God. Only the Father can know Jesus the Son since only One who is infinite in knowledge knows another who is infinite in knowledge.

Fourthly, Jesus is **omnipotent**. Jesus is all powerful as can be seen from the following passages:

Isaiah 9:6 For unto us a child is born, unto us a son is given: and the government shall be upon his shoulder: and his name shall be called Wonderful, Counsellor, The mighty God, The everlasting Father, The Prince of Peace.

Philippians 3:21 Who shall change our vile body, that it may be fashioned like unto his glorious body, according to the working whereby he is able even to subdue all things unto himself.

Revelation 1:8 I am Alpha and Omega, the beginning and the ending, saith the Lord, which is, and which was, and which is to come, the Almighty.

The above passages which clearly apply to Jesus Christ teach that He is “The mighty God”, “able to subdue all things unto himself” and is called the “Almighty”.

Fifthly, Jesus is **immutable**. God does what is consonant with His character and therefore can be depended on, unlike creatures who are always changing. We change our minds, due to new information. We change our ways for lack of resources and power, but these things are never true of God. Two passages below show that Jesus is given this perfection which is only true of God.

Hebrews 1:10 And, Thou, Lord, in the beginning hast laid the foundation of the earth; and the heavens are the works of thine hands:<sup>11</sup> They shall perish; but thou remainest; and they all shall wax old as doth a garment;<sup>12</sup> And as a vesture shalt thou fold them up, and they shall be changed: but thou art the same, and thy years shall not fail.

Here the writer of Hebrews is proving the superiority of the Son over the angels and he does this by referring to His immutable duration. The same is true of the passage given below which requires no comment.

Hebrews 13:8 Jesus Christ the same yesterday, and to day, and for ever.



# 3

## JESUS IS SEEN TO BE GOD FROM THE WORKS THAT HE PERFORMS

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First, Jesus is described as the **Creator** of all things. We read in Genesis 1:1, “In the beginning God created the heaven and the earth”. When we open to the Gospel of John we read these words of our Lord:

John 1:1 In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God.<sup>2</sup> The same was in the beginning with God.<sup>3</sup> All things were made by him; and without him was not any thing made that was made.

Jesus Christ is the Creator of all things. This is not only the testimony of John but also Paul the apostle, for this is how he describes it:

Colossians 1:16 For by him were all things created, that are in heaven, and that are in earth, visible and invisible, whether *they be* thrones, or dominions, or principalities, or powers: all things were created by him, and for him:<sup>17</sup> And he is before all things, and by him all things consist.

It is impossible in the light of the above passage to say Jesus was the first created creature, for Paul makes it clear that Jesus created all things, and that He was before all things. Jehovah Witnesses are guilty of ascribing to a mere creature, however elevated, a work that is only appropriate to God alone.

Secondly, Jesus is **Preserver** of all things. The work of preservation is peculiar to Yahweh as we read in Psalm 36:6, "O LORD, thou preservest man and beast." Yet Paul and the writer of Hebrews attribute the same work to Jesus Christ:

Colossians 1:17 And he is before all things, and by him all things consist.

Hebrews 1:3 Who being the brightness of *his* glory, and the express image of his person, and upholding all things by the word of his power, when he had by himself purged our sins, sat down on the right hand of the Majesty on high;

In John 5 Jesus had healed a lame man on the Sabbath and He is criticized by the Jews who are seeking to kill Him. Jesus makes the following reply:

John 5:17 But Jesus answered them, My Father worketh hitherto, and I work.<sup>18</sup> Therefore the Jews sought the more to kill him, because he not only had broken the sabbath, but said also that God was his Father, making himself equal with God.<sup>19</sup> Then answered Jesus and said unto them, Verily, verily, I say unto you, The Son can do nothing of himself, but what he seeth the Father do: for what things soever he doeth, these also doeth the Son likewise.

Jesus, notice, does not justify His action of healing by appealing to the fact that it is work of mercy which it indeed was, and therefore allowed on the Sabbath. He appeals to the example of God who continues His operations of Providence even to the present. He could not appeal to such unless He was God Himself. In fact, the Jews were not slow in drawing this conclusion, for in verse 18, they say of Jesus that He is "making himself equal with God". Jesus is the God of Providence and preservation.

Thirdly, Jesus is one who **forgives sin**. Sin is committed ultimately against God as David says in Psalm 51:3-4. After his sin with Bathsheba, we read these words:

**Psalm 51:3** For I acknowledge my transgressions: and my sin *is* ever before me.<sup>4</sup> Against thee, thee only, have I sinned, and done *this* evil in thy sight: that thou mightest be justified when thou speakest, *and* be clear when thou judgest.

So David seeks mercy from God to forgive him and to cleanse him from his sin. Jesus again and again is seen in the New Testament as forgiving men and women of their sins. Let us examine one incident which occurs in Mark 2:1-12:

**Mark 2:1** And again he entered into Capernaum after *some* days; and it was noised that he was in the house.<sup>2</sup> And straightway many were gathered together, insomuch that there was no room to receive *them*, no, not so much as about the door: and he preached the word unto them.<sup>3</sup> And they come unto him, bringing one sick of the palsy, which was borne of four.<sup>4</sup> And when they could not come nigh unto him for the press, they uncovered the roof where he was: and when they had broken *it* up, they let down the bed wherein the sick of the palsy lay.<sup>5</sup> When Jesus saw their faith, he said unto the sick of the palsy, Son, thy sins be forgiven thee.<sup>6</sup> But there were certain of the scribes sitting there, and reasoning in their hearts,<sup>7</sup> Why doth this *man* thus speak blasphemies? who can forgive sins but God only?<sup>8</sup> And immediately when Jesus perceived in his spirit that they so reasoned within themselves, he said unto them, Why reason ye these things in your hearts?<sup>9</sup> Whether is it easier to say to the sick of the palsy, *Thy* sins be forgiven thee; or to say, Arise, and take up thy bed, and walk?<sup>10</sup> But that ye may know that the Son of man hath power on earth to forgive sins, (he saith to the sick of the palsy,) <sup>11</sup> I say unto thee, Arise, and take up thy bed, and go thy way into thine house.<sup>12</sup> And immediately he arose, took up the bed, and went forth before them all; insomuch that they were all amazed, and glorified God, saying, We never saw it on this fashion.

In the above passage we see a man sick of the palsy (paralytic) brought to Jesus for healing. Now it is significant that Jesus did not immediately heal the man, but rather forgave him his sin. Sin ultimately is man's problem, and Jesus is therefore dealing with it first. The scribes accused Jesus of committing blasphemy because only God can forgive sins. They would have been right, had Jesus been a mere man, but

they were wrong, because He was God the Son. Of course, it is possible for a man to utter such words of forgiveness without anything really taking place. The scribes were saying prove that his sins are forgiven by healing. In their mind, to utter a mere statement, did not prove the truth of it. Jesus goes on to perform a work to show them that the man's sins had been forgiven. To forgive requires divine power. To heal, can even be performed by men as the apostles demonstrated. Jesus does the lesser in order to prove that His words of forgiveness are true.

Fourthly, **final judgment** is ascribed to Jesus. The Scriptures make it quite clear that Yahweh is to be the Judge of all, "For the LORD is our judge, the LORD is our lawgiver, the LORD is our king; he will save us" (Isaiah 33:22). Paul, a master of the Old Testament, writes the following about Jesus Christ:

2 Corinthians 5:10 For we must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ; that every one may receive the things *done in his body*, according to that he hath done, whether *it be good or bad*.

Fifthly, **resurrection power** is ascribed to Jesus. Jesus demonstrated His power over death even during His earthly ministry by raising the dead. He raised Jairus' daughter (Mark 5:21-43). He raised the widow's son at Nain (Luke 7:11-15) and Lazarus, who had been in the grave four days (John 11). The Lord may have raised many more, but only these are on record. Some may object that these do not prove Jesus is divine, since prophets and apostles also raised the dead. The difference is that these did so not on their own authority, but based on authority they had from God and in the name of Jesus. Our Lord described Himself in these terms, "I am the resurrection and the life: he that believeth in me, though he were dead, yet shall he live" (John 11:25). Jesus claims that, like the Father, He has power to give life to the dead, and in fact, will raise all those who had died when He comes to judge the world:

John 5:21 For as the Father raiseth up the dead, and quickeneth *them*; even so the Son quickeneth whom he will.

John 5:28 Marvel not at this: for the hour is coming, in the which all that are in the graves shall hear his voice,<sup>29</sup> And shall come forth; they that have done good, unto the resurrection of life; and they that have done evil, unto the resurrection of damnation.

No Jew in his right mind would ever ascribe such powers to a prophet, be it Moses or Elijah. No prophet ever claimed such powers to himself. Yet Jesus claims such and goes on to prove His claims by healing the paralytic and by raising Lazarus from the dead. Jesus is not speaking mere words, but words that are followed by mighty deeds that prove them to be true because He is God.



# 4

## JESUS IS GIVEN DIVINE HONOR & WORSHIP

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John 5:22 For the Father judgeth no man, but hath committed all judgment unto the Son: <sup>23</sup> That all *men* should honour the Son, even as they honour the Father. He that honoureth not the Son honoureth not the Father which hath sent him.

**T**he New Testament teaches that Jesus is to be honored just as the Father. Jesus is no lesser deity as the Jehovah Witnesses' teach, but He is to be honored as the Father. Such words would be sheer blasphemy for a mere creature to utter. God shares His glory with no creature. In another passage, Jesus teaches that men are to believe in Him as they believe in God the Father (John 14:1).

In Acts 7 we read of the martyrdom of Stephen because of his faith in Jesus Christ. He points out that the Jews have been a rebellious people and have killed God's prophets. He concludes his speech by telling them that he sees heaven opened, he sees the glory of God, and Jesus, standing at the right hand of God (7:55). The Jews take up stones to put him to death for blasphemy. We read that Stephen was praying to Jesus:

Acts 7:59 And they stoned Stephen, calling upon *God*, and saying, Lord Jesus, receive my spirit. <sup>60</sup> And he kneeled down, and cried with a loud voice, Lord, lay not this sin to their charge. And when he had said this, he fell asleep.

Here is a Jew, who has been raised in a monotheistic faith, and who sees no discrepancy in calling on Jesus in prayer because Jesus is God. He does not retract his statement when he is being put to death, but rather like his Lord before him, utters a prayer for his murderers' forgiveness!

Jesus, when He commissions the disciples after His resurrection, gives them this charge as they go to the ends of the earth:

Matthew 28:19 Go ye therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost:

They are to baptize those who believe in the name (singular) of the Father and the Son and the Holy Ghost. There is one God who exists in three Persons. Men and women are to be baptized into His name because He is the Son of God, and therefore God. The same is true of the benediction which is pronounced by the minister upon the people in worship. It is also done in His name, together with the Father and the Holy Ghost.

2 Corinthians 13:14 The grace of the Lord Jesus Christ, and the love of God, and the communion of the Holy Ghost, *be* with you all. Amen.

The writer of Hebrews points out that even the angels are called upon to worship the Son because He is superior to them as One who is God.

Hebrews 1:6 And again, when he bringeth in the firstbegotten into the world, he saith, And let all the angels of God worship him.

The term, first-begotten, is not a reference to physical begetting but to His preeminence as God's unique Son. These are just a few examples of how Jesus is given divine honor and worship in the New Testament.

# 5

## JESUS' OWN SELF-CONSCIOUSNESS AS GOD IN HIS TEACHING

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First, we are struck by the self-centered aspect of his teaching. John Stott writes, “The most striking feature of the teaching of Jesus is that he was constantly talking about himself....This self-centeredness of the teaching of Jesus immediately sets him apart from the other great religious teachers of the world. They were self-effacing. He was self-advancing. They pointed men away from themselves, saying, ‘That is the truth so far as I perceive it; follow that.’ Jesus said, ‘I am the truth follow me.’ The founder of none of the ethnic religions ever dared to say such a thing.”<sup>5</sup> Listen to some of the things He taught about Himself. Things that would only be proper for one who is God:

John 6:35 And Jesus said unto them, I am the bread of life: he that cometh to me shall never hunger; and he that believeth on me shall never thirst.

John 8:12 Then spake Jesus again unto them, saying, I am the light of the world: he that followeth me shall not walk in darkness, but shall have the light of life.

John 11:25 Jesus said unto her, I am the resurrection, and the life: he that believeth in me, though he were dead, yet shall he live:<sup>26</sup> And whosoever liveth and believeth in me shall never die. Believest thou this?

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5 John Stott, *Basic Christianity* (Downers Grove, IL: IVP books, 1971), 29-30.

John 14:6 Jesus saith unto him, I am the way, the truth, and the life: no man cometh unto the Father, but by me.

Matthew 11:28 Come unto me, all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest.<sup>29</sup> Take my yoke upon you, and learn of me; for I am meek and lowly in heart: and ye shall find rest unto your souls.

John Stott writes, “He affirmed that Abraham had rejoiced to see his day, that Moses had written of him, that the Scriptures bore witness to him, and that indeed the three great divisions of the Old Testament—the law, the prophets and the writing—there were ‘things concerning himself.’”<sup>6</sup>

Secondly, Jesus teaches that He is the revelation of the Father. In His farewell speech, He speaks of His going to the Father. We read the following:

John 14:7 If ye had known me, ye should have known my Father also: and from henceforth ye know him, and have seen him.<sup>8</sup> Philip saith unto him, Lord, shew us the Father, and it sufficeth us.<sup>9</sup> Jesus saith unto him, Have I been so long time with you, and yet hast thou not known me, Philip? he that hath seen me hath seen the Father; and how sayest thou *then*, Shew us the Father?<sup>10</sup> Believest thou not that I am in the Father, and the Father in me? the words that I speak unto you I speak not of myself: but the Father that dwelleth in me, he doeth the works.

Jesus’ response to Philip indicates that Jesus is One who is God manifest in the flesh, and to see Him, is to see the Father. Only those to whom the Son reveals the Father, can know Him (Matthew 11:27).

Thirdly, Jesus is conscious of a special relationship with God as His Only Son. In John 5 we see how He claims to work as His Father in Providence, and that He does as He sees His Father doing. The Jews rightly saw in this statement Jesus making Himself equal with God (John 5:18). Jesus

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6 John Stott, *Basic Christianity*, 30.

does nothing to explain Himself or to deny their conclusion. Jesus claimed a unique relationship to God as His Father so that He can say, "I and the Father are one" (John 10:30). His relationship to God is different from ours and Jesus distinguishes between them. After He rose from the dead, He said to Mary Magdalene, "I am ascending to my Father and your Father." It would not have been possible to say "I ascend to *our* Father."<sup>7</sup>

Fourthly, Jesus was conscious of and taught, that He had glory with the Father before He entered our world and would resume that glory, once His work was consummated. In His High-Priestly prayer we read the following:

John 17:1 These words spake Jesus, and lifted up his eyes to heaven, and said, Father, the hour is come; glorify thy Son, that thy Son also may glorify thee: <sup>2</sup> As thou hast given him power over all flesh, that he should give eternal life to as many as thou hast given him. <sup>3</sup> And this is life eternal, that they might know thee the only true God, and Jesus Christ, whom thou hast sent. <sup>4</sup> I have glorified thee on the earth: I have finished the work which thou gavest me to do. <sup>5</sup> And now, O Father, glorify thou me with thine own self with the glory which I had with thee before the world was.

Especially notice verse 5 where He asks to be glorified "with the glory which I had with thee before the world was." It is not as Jehovah Witnesses teach, that a creature was exalted to glory due to his work, but One who had already enjoyed that glory before He came into the world.

Fifthly, Jesus was conscious of the fact that one day all men will stand before Him in judgment. At the conclusion of the Sermon on the Mount (Matthew 5-7) we read:

Matthew 7:21 Not every one that saith unto me, Lord, Lord, shall enter into the kingdom of heaven; but he that doeth the will of my Father which is in heaven.<sup>22</sup> Many will say to

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7 John Stott, *Basic Christianity*, 35.

me in that day, Lord, Lord, have we not prophesied in thy name? and in thy name have cast out devils? and in thy name done many wonderful works?<sup>23</sup> And then will I profess unto them, I never knew you: depart from me, ye that work iniquity.

Jesus is not a mere teacher of ethics. Some have honored Him for such moral teaching, but fail to acknowledge Him as God and Judge of mankind. Jesus makes it clear that the response to His teaching will decide the destiny of each man. This is made clearer in Matthew 25:31-33:

**Matthew 25:31** When the Son of man shall come in his glory, and all the holy angels with him, then shall he sit upon the throne of his glory:<sup>32</sup> And before him shall be gathered all nations: and he shall separate them one from another, as a shepherd divideth *his* sheep from the goats:<sup>33</sup> And he shall set the sheep on his right hand, but the goats on the left.

Note here the title “Son of Man,” used of our Lord. It does not speak about His humanity, but His Messiahship. The title is borrowed from Daniel 7:13 where He receives from the Father a Kingdom that is everlasting. Here we see that the Son of Man is given the honor of judging all mankind when Jesus returns again with the holy angels.

Now someone may respond by saying lots of people claim things for themselves and it does not mean they are true. Jesus however did not merely teach these things but also by His miracles, attested to their truthfulness. Let us examine His miracles and see how they attested His claims.

# 6

## MIRACLES OF JESUS ATTEST TO THE TRUTHFULNESS OF WHAT HE TAUGHT

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**M**iracles which are works of power manifesting the power of God in the world, are not limited to Jesus. For instance, not only does Jesus raise the dead (Luke 7:11-17; 8:49-56; John 11:38-44), but also Elijah, Elisha, Peter and Paul raise the dead (1 Kings 17:17-24; 2 Kings 4:18-37; Acts 9:36-41; 20:9-12). Miracles in themselves do not attest the divinity of our Lord. However they attest to the truthfulness of what He taught which surely proves He is God. God would not authenticate a deceiver.

There is, of course, a great difference between Jesus and prophets and apostle who also performed miracles. First, Jesus performs so many miracles that the sheer abundance proves Him to be unique. Second, we see the variety of His miracles which cover every aspect of human existence. Jesus is in control of nature (Mark 4:35-41). He exercises control over demons (Mark 5:1-10). He has power over disease (Mark 5:25-35). He has power over death (Mark 5:35-43). No other prophet or apostle had such power. Third, whereas the prophets did what they did by the power given by God, and the apostles, by the power given by Christ, Jesus did by His own power. Fourthly, Jesus' miracles were of greater magnitude as we see Him raising Lazarus after he had been in the grave four days.

The greatness and the variety of Jesus' miracles ought to have convinced the Jews of His claims but it did not do so. John the apostle says as much, but then goes on to explain why they did not believe - because their hearts were hardened:

John 12:37 But though he had done so many miracles before them, yet they believed not on him:<sup>38</sup> That the saying of Esaias the prophet might be fulfilled, which he spake, Lord, who hath believed our report? and to whom hath the arm of the Lord been revealed?<sup>39</sup> Therefore they could not believe, because that Esaias said again,<sup>40</sup> He hath blinded their eyes, and hardened their heart; that they should not see with *their* eyes, nor understand with *their* heart, and be converted, and I should heal them.<sup>41</sup> These things said Esaias, when he saw his glory, and spake of him.

So what is the significance of miracles? James Packer writes, "The miracles in Scripture are nearly all clustered in the time of Exodus, of Elijah, and Elisha, and of Christ and his apostles. First of all, they authenticate the miracle workers themselves as God's representatives and messengers (cf. Exodus 4:1-9; 1 Kings 17:24; John 10:38; 14:11; 2 Corinthians 12:12; Hebrews 2:3-4); and they also show forth something of God's power in salvation and judgment."<sup>8</sup> So their value for Jesus lies not as a direct proof of His deity, but of all that He taught which includes teaching about His divine origin. If Jesus is not divine then God has deceived us by giving Him power to do such mighty miracles, the very thought of which, is blasphemy. Jesus is God, for no man could do such miracles as He had done, the greatest of which is His own resurrection.

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8 J. I. Packer, *Concise Theology* (Wheaton, IL: Tyndale House Publishers, Inc., 1993), 58.

# 7

## JESUS' RESURRECTION FROM THE DEAD IS CONSONANT WITH HIS DEITY

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If Jesus had not risen, there would be no discussion as to His deity, for no one would have believed in Him. On three occasions Jesus predicted His own death and consequent resurrection after three days:

**Mark 8:31** And he began to teach them, that the Son of man must suffer many things, and be rejected of the elders, and of the chief priests, and scribes, and be killed, and after three days rise again.

**Mark 9:31** For he taught his disciples, and said unto them, The Son of man is delivered into the hands of men, and they shall kill him; and after that he is killed, he shall rise the third day.

**Mark 10:33** *Saying*, Behold, we go up to Jerusalem; and the Son of man shall be delivered unto the chief priests, and unto the scribes; and they shall condemn him to death, and shall deliver him to the Gentiles:<sup>34</sup> And they shall mock him, and shall scourge him, and shall spit upon him, and shall kill him: and the third day he shall rise again.

John Stott comments, "It is not a question of his spiritual survival, nor of his physical resuscitation, but of his conquest of death and his resurrection to a new plane of existence altogether. We do not know of anyone else who has had this experience...The argument is not that

his resurrection establishes his deity, but that it is consistent with it.”<sup>9</sup> So the purpose of bringing forward His resurrection is not so much as proof of His deity, but to state once again that it attests His teaching.

The resurrection is well attested in the Scriptures. John Stott concludes his chapter on the resurrection with this, “The body had disappeared. The grave clothes remained undisturbed. The Lord was seen. And the disciples were changed. There is no adequate explanation of these phenomena other than the great Christian affirmation “the Lord is risen indeed.”<sup>10</sup> The Scriptures regard the deity not to rest upon His resurrection but rather the resurrection rests upon His deity. We read in Acts 2:24: “God raised him from the dead...because it was impossible for death to keep its hold on him.” Donald Macleod comments, “He was raised because of what he was. He did not become Son by being raised: he was raised because he was Son.”<sup>11</sup> So Paul writes in Romans:

**Romans 1:4** And declared *to be* the Son of God with power, according to the spirit of holiness, by the resurrection from the dead:

The resurrection does not raise Jesus to Divine status, but declares Him to be what He always was from eternity, the Son of God.

Jesus’ resurrection is different from all other risings from the dead. All who were raised would return to the grave, but Jesus rises to glory never to taste death again. The other resurrections were a return to life as they knew it. Jesus overcomes death, and rises with a glorious body. All other resurrections involved another agent, prophet or apostle. Jesus takes up the life He laid down. Jesus once said:

**John 10:17** Therefore doth my Father love me, because I lay down my life, that I might take it again.<sup>18</sup> No man taketh it from me, but I lay it down of myself. I have power to lay it down, and I have power to take it again. This commandment have I received of my Father.

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9 John Stott, *Basic Christianity*, 57.

10 John Stott, *Basic Christianity*, 73.

11 Donald Macleod, *The Person of Christ*, 91.

The resurrection is Jesus fulfilling what is taught here. The resurrection is God's seal to the truthfulness of His Son.



## CONCLUSIONS

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First, the deity of Jesus is taught clearly by Himself. He made no attempt to take back any statement, not even when He was on trial for blasphemy. In fact, so close was the identification with God, that all that could be said in relation to God, was true in relation to Him.

To know Him was to know God;

To see Him was to see God;

To believe in Him was to believe in God;

To receive Him was to receive God;

To hate Him was to hate God;

To honor Him was to honor God.

(John 8:19; 14:7; 12:45; 14:9; 12:44; 14:1; Mark 9:37; John 15:23; 5:23).<sup>12</sup>

Secondly, testimony to His deity is borne by His disciples who were monotheists to the core. Donald Macleod answers the charge of those who say it was the church that deified Him:

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12 John Stott, *Basic Christianity*, 35.

Suppose that the monotheist prejudices of first-century Jews had been overcome and that they were open to some extension of their notion of deity; suppose they were even willing to entertain the idea that a man might, in some sense, be God; would they have turned to a crucified man, one whose weakness was only too palpable and whose sinful, criminal status had been highlighted so dramatically? It surely required the impulse of more than ordinary human loyalty to divinize a man crucified for blasphemy and Messianic delusions.<sup>13</sup>

The death of Christ was a stumbling block to the Jews and foolishness to the Greeks. Yet such is the Savior that the disciples proclaimed.

Thirdly, not only was testimony borne by His disciples who were monotheists, but it was borne by a Jewish rabbi who did his utmost to root out the cause of Christ from the face of the earth. It is Saul of Tarsus who, having been converted on the road to Damascus, bears Him the most eloquent testimony. Listen to what he writes in Philippians:

**Philippians 2:6** Who, being in the form of God, thought it not robbery to be equal with God:<sup>7</sup> But made himself of no reputation, and took upon him the form of a servant, and was made in the likeness of men:<sup>8</sup> And being found in fashion as a man, he humbled himself, and became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross.<sup>9</sup> Wherefore God also hath highly exalted him, and given him a name which is above every name:<sup>10</sup> That at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, of *things* in heaven, and *things* in earth, and *things* under the earth;<sup>11</sup> And *that* every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ *is* Lord, to the glory of God the Father.

Fourthly, if Jesus is God, it means every other religion is false. Jesus said, "I am the way, the truth, and the life: no man cometh unto

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13 Donald Macleod, *The Person of Christ*, 114.

the Father but by me (John 14:6).” Jesus, being God, means He was not a victim but His life was voluntarily laid down. It was given as a ransom for many (Mark 10:45). Jesus’ death was to remove the guilt of our sins. If we are to be saved we must believe in Him as we believe in God. We must trust in His sacrifice for sin as removing our guilt and in His perfect obedience as our righteousness, to give us title to life eternal. It is not sufficient to honor Jesus Christ as a great prophet, or teacher while denying His deity. We are to honor Him as we honor the Father. Nothing less will do. What should our response be to Jesus Christ? Only one response is proper. That is, to fall down and worship Him. Not only because He is our Creator, but also because He has redeemed us by His life, given up unto death on the cross. Worship of Jesus is not blasphemy, but our supreme act of devotion to such a wonderful Savior.

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