

Deity of Christ **Colossians 1:15-17**

Over the course of human history two key questions emerge as the most important that every person must answer. Answers determine where they will spend eternity. Jesus asked the first question & Pilate the second.

Jesus Matt 16:15 ‘...*who do you say that I am?*’

Pilate Matt 27:22 ‘..*what shall I do w/ Jesus who is called the Christ?*’

Eternity hangs in the balance w/ our answer to these two questions. *Who is Jesus & What am I going to do w/ Him.*

Christ’ resurrection proves two things; **1**-He is God. **2**-All critics are liars who seek to downgrade Jesus into something less than He claims to be

CS Lewis--I am trying here to prevent anyone saying the really foolish thing that people often say about Him, which is: 'I'm ready to accept Jesus as a great moral teacher, but I don't accept His claim to be God.' But that is the one thing we must not say. A man who was merely a man & said the sort of things Jesus said would not be a great moral teacher. He would either be a lunatic--on the level w/ the man who says he is a poached egg--or else he would be the Devil of Hell. You must make your choice. Either this 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 & kill Him as a demon; or you can fall at His feet & call Him Lord & God. But let us not come w/ any patronizing nonsense about His being a great human teacher. He has not left that open to us. He did not intend to.

Rom 1:3,4 concerning His Son, who was born of a descendant of David according to the flesh, who was declared the Son of God w/ power by the resurrection from the dead, according to the Spirit of holiness, Jesus Christ our Lord.

HA Ironside---After His resurrection He is hailed as the Firstborn from among the dead...the head of the body, the church & the beginning of the creation of God, the firstborn among many brethren, the resurrected King-Priest; the One who is yet to rule the world in glory; the Melchizedek of the age to come...’

Fox’s book of martyrs reports *less than 300 years after the church began 5 million believers were martyred for their faith in Christ.* The last & most ruthless persecutor was Diocleatian (303-313 AD). He thought he had stamped out Christianity & commissioned a commemorative coin struck w/ the inscription ‘*The Christian religion is destroyed & the worship of the Roman gods is restored.*’

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Diocleatian & his gods today are consigned to the rubbish heap of profane history, while Christianity is everywhere & flourishing.

Jesus says there is only **one** road, only **one** belief systems, only **one** way that leads to heaven; all others lead to eternal separation from God.

John 3:36 He who believes in the Son has everlasting life; and he who does not believe the Son shall not see life, but the wrath of God abides on him.

Jn 8:24 Therefore I said to you that you will die in your sins; for unless you believe that I am He, you will die in your sins. Believing in what? That God has come in the flesh to die for our sins.

When asked 'who do you think Jesus is?' People give wrong answers saying 'prophet', 'moral teacher', 'good man'. But consider, if Jesus is not the God-man he is not a good man but a deceiver or deranged because He said He was God and is not. But the Bible says He is God come in the flesh.

Colossians 1:15-17 He is the image of the invisible God, the firstborn of all creation. 16 For by Him all things were created, both in the heavens and on earth, visible and invisible, whether thrones or dominions or rulers or authorities, all things have been created by Him and for Him. 17 He is before all things and in Him all things hold together.

If we miss His deity, we miss salvation '***unless you believe I Am He you shall die in your sins***'. Any other idea is merely New Thought, New Age Woke teaching about Christ that downgrades who He is. ***Unity 'one reality'***

symposium. 1st C called Gnosticism, Oriental mysticism, Jewish legalism

1 Jn 4:1 Beloved do not believe every spirit, but test the spirits to see whether they are from God, because many false prophets have gone out into the world.

Letter to Colossians exhorted to tests the spirits, then declares Jesus as the Son of God 2nd person in eternal Godhead—Father, Son, H.S.

Jesus is 1--the **image** of God--in material creation the firstborn Son (**resurrected Acts 13:33**). Who is 2—**Pre-eminent**. 3—**Creator**. **Three credentials to ID Him as God come in the flesh.**

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1—*Image* – Vincent, Robertson, Wuest & other Grk scholars say it's more than likeness. **Franklin/Billy – Me/Bud**.....But prototype—God expressing His character & nature in the son. Grk Eikon--closest word we have for photograph. A picture of God taken in heaven, the film developed on earth & its image is Jesus Christ.

Lit ***Essentially & absolutely the perfect expression & representative of God the Father..***

Phillip said 'Lord, show us the Father, and it is enough for us.' *Jn 14:7-9* **Jesus answered him, 'Have I been w/ you so long and yet you have not come to know Me, Phillip? He who has seen Me has seen the Father; how can you say, 'Show us the Father'?** **Jesus is the image of the invisible God.**

How did God come to earth? *Jn 1:1* ***In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was w/ God & the Word was God. He was in the beginning w/ God. All things came into being by Him & apart from Him nothing came into to being that has come into being :14 And the Word became flesh, and dwelt among us, and we beheld His glory, glory as the only begotten of the Father, full of grace and truth.***

God the Father declaring the fact that Jesus the Son is the image of the God. *Heb 1:3* ***And He is the radiance of His glory and the exact representation of His nature and upholds all things by the word of His power.***

Radiance--outshining, brilliance emanating from God. Not reflected glory as Moses (**Bahai**) but lights source, its origin. If you want to know what God is like look at Jesus *Jn 10:30* ***'I and the Father are one.'***

2--Firstborn (not first of creation) but priority of position in creation--sovereign over creation. In OT it is one who is given the privileged, primary position. *Ex 4:22* ***Thus says the LORD, 'Israel is My son, My firstborn'*** (Egypt, Canaanites, etc existed) But Israel is in honored, 1st place position.

When God speaks of David as His servant (:20) *Ps 89:27* ***'I also shall make him My firstborn, the highest of the kings of the earth.'*** Yet David was the youngest of 8 sons. Yet David was pre-eminent among his brothers as Jesus is pre-eminent among creation. Why? He is the creator *:16* ***'by Him all things were created...'***

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Jesus uses the eternal name of God to ID Himself. *Ex 3:14 God said to Moses, 'I Am WHO I AM' and He said, 'Thus you shall say to the sons of Israel I AM has sent me to you.'* Name describes eternal nature—Israel recognized God as the great 'I AM'.

Dispute w/ Pharisees over scripture & fact Jesus fulfilling it before their eyes. *He said Ab rejoiced to see my day and he saw it....you are not yet 50 years old and you have seen Ab...Jn 8:58,59 Jesus said to them, 'Truly, truly, I say to you, before Ab was, I am.'* Therefore they picked up stones to throw at Him, but Jesus hid Himself and went out of the temple. Today there is as much opposition to admitting Jesus is God as in NT times.

3--Creator :16 *Jn 1:3,10 All things came into being by Him (were made by Him) & apart from Him nothing came into being that has come into being. :10 He was in the world, and the world was made by Him, and the world did not know Him. They still don't know Him.*

1 Cor 8:6 But we know that there is only one God, the Father, who created all things and made us to be his own; and one Lord Jesus Christ, who made everything and gives us life LB There are either 2 creators--Father & Son or both are Creator/God.

Heb 1:2 But now in these days He has spoken to us thru His Son to whom He has given everything and thru whom He made the world and everything there is LB
Son creator

Is 40:28 Do you not know? Have you not heard? The everlasting God, the LORD, the Creator of the ends of the earth does not become weary or tired. His understanding is inscrutable. Father creator

Problem passages

RyR '....good teacher what must I do to inherit eternal life' Mk 10:18 And Jesus said to him, 'Why do you call Me good? No one is good except God alone. Not a denial of Deity but drawing into revelation of who Jesus is-God in flesh

Jesus is teaching about going to Father's house, preparing the way for His disciples.

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Jn 14:28 'You heard that I said to you, 'I go away, and I will come to you. 'If you loved Me you would have rejoiced because I go to the Father, for the Father is greater than I. Jesus refers to the Fathers authority not superiority. Phil 2:6,7 who although He existed in the form of God, did not regard equality w/ God a thing to be grasped, but emptied Himself taking the form of a bond-servant and being made in the likeness of men. Not the Father better-quality but greater-authority. His office not His essence.

Worship—Ex 34:14 for you shall not worship any other god, for the LORD whose name is Jealous, is a jealous God

And yet Heb 1:6 And when He again brings the firstborn (pre-eminent one) into the world, He says, 'And Let all the Angels of God worship Him.'

Satan solicits Jesus worship Lk 4:8 'It is written, you shall worship the Lord your God and serve Him only'

And yet after Jesus resurrection Jn 20:28 Thomas answered and said to Him 'My Lord and my God'. JW say it is a statement of surprise. And yet Jesus does not rebuke him but accepts worship & encourages others to do the same. 'Blesses are they who do not see and yet believe...imply worshipping Him as God.

Rev 1:8 'I am the Alpha and the Omega,' says the Lord God, 'who is and who was and who is to come, the Almighty. Rev 21:6 And He said to me, 'It is done. I am the Alpha and the Omega, the beginning and the end. The first & last letters of the Greek alphabet--referring to Jehovah God

Rev 1:11 'I am Alpha and Omega, the first and the last...KJV 22:12,13 Behold, I am coming quickly (7,12,16,20) and My reward is w/ Me to render to every man according to what he has done. I am the Alpha and the Omega, the first and the last, the beginning and the end. Here is refers to Jesus. So either 2--Alpha & Omegas. 2--First & Last 2--Beginning & Ends or Jesus is God

Is 44:6 Thus says the Lord, the King of Israel And his Redeemer, the Lord of hosts; I am the first and I am the last and there is no God besides Me. Rev 1:17,18

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And when I saw Him, I fell at His feet as a dead man. And He laid His right hand upon me, saying, 'Do not be afraid; I am the first and the last, and the living One; and I was dead, and behold, I am alive forevermore, and I have the keys of death and of Hell. Jesus in the NT ID's Himself w/ God of the OT

2 Cor 11:3,4 But I am afraid, lest as the serpent deceived Eve by his craftiness, your minds should be led astray from the simplicity and purity of devotion to Christ. For if one comes and preaches another Jesus whom we have not preached, or you receive a different spirit which you have not received or a different gospel which you have not accepted, you bear this beautifully. NT Gnosticism – today spirituality, new thought new age---same teaching different packaging.

1 Thes 5:21 But examine everything carefully; hold fast to that which is good.

Who do you say Jesus is? What will you do w/ Him? Jn 1:12 But as many as receive Him, to them he gave the right to become children of God even to those who believe in His name. Receiving what?

His sinless humanity. His eternal deity. Virgin birth, Vicarious sacrifice, His resurrection, the only advocate & HP w/ Father & fact that He is coming again for those who believe.

The French atheist Voltaire was one of the most talented authors of his time. With his pen he set out to destroy Christianity. Of Jesus he said *'Curse the wretch. In twenty years Christianity will be no more. My single hand shall destroy the edifice it took twelve apostles to rear.* After his death the Geneva Bible Society bought his house used it as their headquarters & began printing & distributing Bibles from it. At his death the nurse attending Voltaire said *for all the wealth in Europe I would not see another infidel die'* His physician recounts Voltaire's last desperate words *'I am abandoned by God and man. I will give you half of what I am worth if you will give me six months of life. Then I shall go to hell; and you will go w/ me. O Christ. O Jesus Christ.*

Jesus said unless *you believe you shall die in your sins Jn 8:24*