

The logo for "Explore God" with "explore" in white lowercase script and "God" in blue uppercase sans-serif font, with a trademark symbol.The title "THE 7 BIG QUESTIONS" in white uppercase sans-serif font, centered below the logo.

"Is Jesus Really God?"

**Idea:** The evidence is abundantly clear that Jesus is in fact God in the flesh.

**Intro:** Is Jesus really God? Perhaps this is the greatest question that we have to wrestle with in life. After all, if Jesus is not God then there is no demand upon our lives to believe in and follow Him, but if Jesus is in fact God, then we have no other option than to fall down before Him in worship and submission. Therefore, it is necessary that we understand and know the answer to this BIG question of life.

Jesus Christ is easily the most important figure in all of history. Author Tim LaHaye wrote of Him, "Almost everyone who has heard of Jesus has developed an opinion about Him. That is to be expected, for He is not only the most famous person in world history, but also the most controversial." Philip Yancey concurs. He said of Jesus, "It occurs to me that all the contorted theories about Jesus that have been spontaneously generating since the day of his death merely confirm the awesome risk God took when he stretched himself out on the dissection table – a risk he seemed to welcome. Examine me. Test me. You decide."

**Inquiry:** The reason Jesus is the most controversial person in history is due in large part because of the outlandish declarations He made during His life and ministry. Imagine your neighbor making these kinds of claims: “I am the first and the last – the self-existing One. Do you need your sins forgiven? I can do it. Do you want to know how to live? I am the light of the world – whoever follows me will never walk in darkness, but will have the light of life. Do you want to know whom you can trust? All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me. Do you have any worries or requests? Pray in my name. If you remain in me and my words remain in you, ask whatever you wish, and it will be given you. Do you need access to God the Father? No one comes to the Father except through me. The Father and I are one.”

What would you think of your neighbor if he seriously said those things? You wouldn't think that he's a great moral teacher. You'd probably think he is nuts and be looking for a realtor. C. S. Lewis brilliantly articulated this point.

“I am trying here to prevent anyone saying the really foolish things 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 is 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 rather be a lunatic – on a level with 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 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.”

Therefore, Jesus was one of three things during His life. He was either a liar who completely fabricated His teaching and

ministry, a lunatic who thought He was God, or in fact the Lord of all. Being a liar doesn't fit the facts. Jesus lived and taught the highest standard of ethics. And it is unlikely he would have laid down His life unless He thought He was telling the truth. Lunatic doesn't fit either. Jesus uttered some of the most profound sayings ever recorded. Even Jesus' enemies claimed that He was a man of integrity and one who taught the truth. This leaves us with Lord. Yet no other major religious leader in history including Moses, Paul, Buddha, Mohammad, or Confucius ever claimed to be God. Jesus is the only religious leader who ever both claimed to be deity and convince a large portion of the population that He was God.

Is Jesus really God? I believe the evidence is abundantly clear that Jesus is in fact God in the flesh. Here are five validations.

### **1. The Old Testament prophets predicted Jesus' deity.**

Read Isaiah 52:13-53:12.

Who does this this passage seem to be pointing toward?  
It sounds like the Jesus of the Bible.

Jesus is one of over forty Jewish men who have claimed to be the Christ, so how do we know that Jesus of Nazareth is really the promised Messiah? The OT contains hundreds of specific messianic prophecies about the Messiah. Due to the volume and specific nature of the prophecies, accidental fulfillment of these prophecies is impossible according to the laws of probability. Jesus of Nazareth is the only person in history who has fulfilled every one of the prophecies. According to Frank Harber, there are 456 identifiable prophecies fulfilled by Jesus. Peter Stoner states that the chances of any man fulfilling just 48 of such prophecies is a probability of  $10^{157}$ .

Therefore, this indicates a supernatural agent. The fact that Jesus is the Messiah is not just a clever guess.

There is no way that Jesus could have been an impostor who carefully arranged the fulfillment of all the prophecies. To reject Jesus as Messiah requires an unbelief that runs counter to the laws of probability.

## **2. The New Testament authors proclaimed Jesus' deity.**

Jesus is in fact God as indicated by the writers of the New Testament. There was no doubt in their minds as to who He was and is today.

Read John 1:1-5,14-18.

Read Colossians 1:15-20.

Read Hebrews 1:1-4,8-9.

The NT authors were convinced of Jesus' deity largely because His life backed up what He had declared.

Read John 8:56-59.

Read Mark 14:61-64.

In using the phrase "I AM" Jesus is quoting the very name God gave Moses at the burning bush. He is declaring Himself as the self-existent One. Therefore, the NT writers never believed or taught that Jesus was a son of God, a man who became like God, or a great teacher who was used by God. No, they clearly declared that Jesus Christ was in fact God in the flesh. He is Immanuel, God with Us.

## **3. The demons of hell pronounced Jesus' deity.**

Read Mark 5:1-7.

*33 And in the synagogue there was a man who had the spirit of an unclean demon, and he cried out with a loud*

voice, 34 "Ha! What have you to do with us, Jesus of Nazareth? Have you come to destroy us? I know who you are—the Holy One of God." – Luke 4:33-34

There might have been doubt on the part of the men and women who heard Jesus speak and watched Him perform miracles, but there was never a doubt in the minds of the demons. They knew who He was, and they always submitted to His authority as their God.

#### **4. The miracles of Christ personify Jesus' deity.**

In John 10 some Jews gathered around Jesus and asked if He was the Christ. Jesus responded by pointing to the miracles that He had done.

*Jesus answered them, "I told you, and you do not believe. The works that I do in my Father's name bear witness about me." - John 10:25*

It is one thing to claim to be God, but it is another matter to prove it. A claim of deity must be accompanied by extraordinary evidence. One of the ways Jesus demonstrated that He was God was by performing miracles. Miracles occur in the Bible as a means of authenticating divine revelation. When Jesus began His ministry, He unleashed a series of miracles, which arrested the world's attention. He healed the sick, gave sight to the blind, fed thousands of people from a handful of food, demonstrated power over nature, and raised the dead. These miracles were performed in the open and served to validate His claims.

It is interesting that every time the Sanhedrin met to discuss Jesus, it was never to decide whether or not His miracles were real. They had no doubt that they were real. They just missed the point for which they were

performed. They couldn't see that Jesus was God in the flesh...the prophesied Messiah.

## 5. The resurrection of Christ proved Jesus' deity.

If the miracles of feeding the hungry, healing the sick, and calming the storms were not enough to prove the deity of Jesus, a resurrection definitely was. After Lazarus' death, Jesus came to Bethany to be with Mary and Martha and to bring back to life his dear friend (John 11).

Read John 11:23-27, 38-45.

Jesus resurrected Lazarus and others from the dead. These miracles proved that Jesus possessed the power of God. The apostles post Pentecost also possessed the power of God and raised the dead (Acts 9:36-43). But none of Christ's followers ever raised themselves from the dead. Only God raised Himself from the dead as God the Father raised to life God the Son. The resurrection is the single greatest validation of the deity of Jesus Christ. Upon it hangs every aspect of our faith (1 Cor 15:13-22). It sets Jesus apart from every other religious leader in history.

Michael Green makes the point well: "Christianity does not hold the resurrection to be one among many tenets of belief. Without faith in the resurrection there would be no Christianity at all... Christianity stands or falls with the truth of the resurrection. Once disprove it, and you have disposed of Christianity."

**Conclusion:** So is Jesus really God? I don't believe there is a question that demands the correct answer more than this one. It literally changes everything. When confronted with the reality of Jesus, Martha boldly declared that Jesus is the Christ the Son of God (John 11:27). Likewise, Peter when asked by

Jesus who he thought he was declared, “You are the Christ, the Son of the Living God” (Matt 16:16).

Who do you say that Jesus is? Was He a good, moral teacher? Was He merely a religious leader? Was He a holy man who became God? Was He an angel who was raised to deity? No, Jesus is God the Son. He is coequal with God the Father and God the Holy Spirit. Together they make up the One Godhead.

## 2 Implications:

- Because Jesus is God, I must make a decision to follow or reject Him.
- Because Jesus is God, I must obey what He has said.