

Did Jesus Claim to be God?

Introduction:

1. With the onslaught of people trying to discredit God and the Bible, it should come as no surprise that they are also attacking the validity of Jesus Christ Himself!
 - a. Some go so far as to even say Jesus never existed (which can be proven to be a false statement by historical documents).
 - b. Some say that He was elevated in stature over the years because legends and myths grew up about Him.
 - c. Still others will say Jesus existed as portrayed in the Bible, but that He is not God.
 2. The Jehovah's Witnesses say Jesus was the first created being, an angel, which then created everything else.
 - a. They put forth the idea that Jesus never claimed to be God.
 - b. They even add words to the text of the Bible to go along with their claims.
 - c. John 1:1 – they say "...and the word was A god."
 - d. Colossians 1:16 – they say "by him were all **OTHER** things created."
 - e. In other places they do similar things to go along with their beliefs.
 3. The Bible asserts that Jesus is God (John 1:1, 14, others).
 - a. But what about Jesus Himself?
 - b. Did He ever claim to be God while He was here on earth?
 - c. If He did, the Jehovah's Witnesses' doctrine is completely destroyed.
 - d. What saith the Scriptures on this matter?
- I. Jesus accepted worship.
- A. Who did Jesus say was worthy of worship?
 1. We can see this attitude spelled out when Jesus was tempted (Matthew 4:9-10).
 2. Satan promised Jesus all the kingdoms of the world if He would fall down and worship him.
 3. Jesus said "It is written, thou shalt worship the Lord thy God, and Him only shalt thou serve."
 4. Jesus said the **ONLY** one that was to be worshipped was God.
 - B. The apostles rejected worship.
 1. Cornelius attempted to worship Peter (Acts 10:25), but Peter rebuked him saying "Stand up, I myself am also a man."
 - a. Peter made it clear that no mere man is worthy of worship.
 - b. In fact, it says Peter "took him up," showing that Peter physically made Cornelius stop.
 2. The people of Lystra, after Paul healed a lame man, began to worship Paul and Barnabas (Acts 14:8-18).
 - a. They called them Jupiter and Mercury (14:11-12).
 - b. They even were about to offer sacrifices to them (14:13).
 - c. Paul and Barnabas ran amongst the people, crying out for them to stop (14:14).
 - d. They said "we also are men" (14:15).
 - e. It took all they had to get these people to stop worshipping them (14:18).
 - f. They made the point that no man is worthy of worship.
 - C. Angels rejected worship.

1. John, after receiving part of the Revelation, bowed down before an angel to worship him (Revelation 19:10).
 - a. The angel rejected worship, saying that he was a servant of God as well (a fellow-servant).
 - b. Then the angel redirected John's attention to where worship should be: "Worship God."
 2. John again, at the end of the Revelation, fell down to worship the angel who was showing him these things (Revelation 22:8-9).
 - a. This angel gave the same reason for rejecting worship.
 - b. Again, he directed John (and us) to the right recipient of worship: "Worship God."
- D. Jesus accepted worship.
1. Remember that Jesus said worship was only to be directed at God (Matthew 4:9-10).
 2. A man Jesus healed worshipped Him (John 9:35-39).
 - a. This formerly blind man stood up for Jesus in the face of the Pharisees (John 9:15-18, 24-33).
 - b. He was cast out, and Jesus approached him, asking "dost thou believe on the Son of God?"
 - c. The man said, "who is he Lord, that I might believe on Him?"
 - d. Jesus said "it is He who talketh with thee."
 - e. Immediately the man fell down and worshipped Jesus.
 - f. Jesus did not correct him, nor reject the worship.
 3. The disciples worshipped Him (Matthew 14:26-33).
 - a. After Jesus walked on the water in the midst of a storm, He got into the boat.
 - b. As soon as he got into the boat, the storm ceased.
 - c. The disciples worshipped Him, saying "of a truth, thou art the Son of God."
 - d. Jesus never rejected the worship nor corrected them.
 4. Other instances could be given, but these should suffice.
 - a. If even one instance is given where Jesus accepted worship, then we have Jesus claiming to be God.
 - b. Jesus said only God deserves worship.
 - c. If Jesus was not God, He was sinning by accepting the worship.
 - d. This would invalidate the entirety of the New Testament.
 - 1) We would no longer have a perfect sacrifice.
 - 2) We would not be able to trust the Scriptures which say Jesus had no sin.
 - 3) We would not be able to look to Christ as our example.
- E. Since worship is only to be directed towards God (according to Jesus' own statement), and Jesus accepted worship, Jesus claimed to be God!
- F. What about those people who are worshipped today?
1. People may not think they are worshipping material things or other people, but sometimes they are!
 2. There are TV shows like one called "American Idol."
 3. Have you ever stopped and thought about why young stars and singers are called "teen idols"?

4. Many are indeed worshipping these people!
5. What about materialism?
6. Anything you put ahead of God (job, family, money, things, sports, etc...) is an idol.
7. Put simply, some people are claiming these things are the true God instead of showing that they believe the God of heaven is the one true God!

II. Jesus forgave sins.

- A. Jesus instructed His disciples (and us) to pray to the Father (God) for forgiveness of sins (Matthew 6:12).
 1. He said that the prayer of man should be directed to the Father (Matthew 6:9).
 2. He Himself, also directed His prayers to the Father (John 17:1).
 3. Part of man's prayers should be asking for forgiveness of sins.
- B. Jesus said that God is the one who would forgive sins.
 1. The Father will forgive us as we forgive others (Matthew 6:14).
 2. If we do not forgive others, the Father will not forgive us (Matthew 6:15).
- C. Jesus asked the Father to forgive those who crucified Him (Luke 23:34).
- D. Peter told Simon the former sorcerer to pray to God for forgiveness of his sins (Acts 8:22).
- E. John said Christians must confess their sins to God in order to have HIM forgive us of those sins (I John 1:9, cf vv 5-10).
- F. The ability to forgive sins was always associated with God.
 1. We are to forgive those who have sinned against us.
 2. Ultimately, though, God's forgiveness is what is eternally important.
- G. On three recorded occasions, Jesus claimed to have power to forgive the sins of people.
 1. A man was paralyzed, and brought to Jesus (Matthew 9:2).
 - a. This man was brought into a crowded house through the roof by some of his friends (Mark 2:1-4).
 - b. When Jesus saw how much faith was expressed in this act, He said to the paralyzed man, "Son, be of good cheer; thy sins be forgiven thee" (Matthew 9:2).
 - c. The Jews, correctly so, knew that only God can forgive sins (Mark 2:7).
 - d. In order to prove that Jesus had the ability to forgive the sins of people (even those not done physically against Him), He performed a miracle in healing the paralyzed man (Matthew 9:6-7).
 - e. The Jews accused Him of blasphemy (claiming to be God).
 - f. Since miracles were a sign from God that He approved of the message and messenger (Mark 16:20), this shows the Father agreed that the Son had the authority to forgive sins (something only God could do).
 2. A woman at Simon the Pharisee's house anointed Jesus feet with oil (Luke 7:36-50).
 - a. Simon, being self-righteous, said "if this man were a prophet, He would have known who and what manner of woman this is that toucheth Him, for she is a sinner" (7:39).
 - b. Jesus reprimanded Simon, and showed how this woman showed more love than he did (7:44-47).
 - c. Then He looked at the woman and said "Thy sins are forgiven" (7:48).
 - d. The people there wondered, "Who is this that forgiveth sins also?" (7:49).

- e. This woman never sinned against Jesus personally, but He forgave her of all her sins, calling her “saved.”
 - f. Since Jesus stated that God is the one that forgives sins, and then He forgave sins, it is proof that Jesus was claiming to be God.
 - 3. The thief on the cross (Luke 23:39-43).
 - a. This thief had previously ridiculed Jesus (Matthew 27:44).
 - b. Near the end of Jesus’ time on the cross, one thief had a change of heart towards Jesus: he told the other thief to be quiet, for they deserved death, Jesus did not (Luke 23:39-41).
 - c. This thief asked Jesus to remember him when He came into His kingdom.
 - d. Jesus said “today you will be with Me in paradise.”
 - e. Jesus forgave the man’s sins (the man confessed he was a sinner).
 - f. Jesus, even on the cross, claimed to be God.
 - 4. Why didn’t Jesus forgive the sins of the crowd which killed Him?
 - a. Jesus was going to die soon, and these people were not repentant at that time.
 - b. Jesus never offered forgiveness to those who did not show belief in Him.
 - c. Jesus Himself said that He had power on earth to forgive sin.
 - H. Jesus said God is the one who can forgive sins, yet He forgave sins, showing that Jesus believed He was God.
 - I. What about those on earth who claim to have the power to forgive sins?
 - 1. The Catholic Church has laid claim to the exclusive right on earth to forgive sins.
 - a. In fact, if you don’t confess before a priest, you can’t have your sins forgiven.
 - b. Apparently, they believe God can no longer forgive sins without a priest’s involvement.
 - 2. Others make the declaration that sins are forgiven, even when the person was never repentant!
 - a. They’ll say “Oh, God will overlook that.”
 - b. Or perhaps, “cheating on your taxes isn’t a big sin, so it won’t matter.”
 - c. Maybe speeding? Gossiping?
 - 3. Anyone making this claim may not realize it, but they are claiming to be in the place of God!
- III. Jesus called Himself “the Son of God.”
- A. Forty-five times in the NT, Jesus is called “the Son of God.”
 - 1. Gabriel announced that Jesus would be called the Son of God (Luke 1:35).
 - 2. Satan used this title to tempt Jesus (if you are truly the Son of God- Matthew 4).
 - 3. The demons acknowledged Jesus was the Son of God (Matthew 8:29).
 - 4. His disciples called Him “the Son of God” (Matthew 14:33).
 - 5. The inspired writer, Mark, stated that Jesus was the Son of God (Mark 1:1).
 - 6. Never once did Jesus contradict them in these statements.
 - B. Jesus acknowledged He was the Son of God.
 - 1. When on trial, Jesus was asked point blank if He was “the Christ, the Son of God” (Matthew 26:63).
 - a. Jesus’ response was “Thou hast said.”
 - b. This basically means “it is as you have said.”
 - c. Jesus was saying “Yes, I am the Son of God.”

2. When Jesus asked who men said that He was, many responses were given (Matthew 16:13-14).
 - a. Afterwards, Jesus asked who the disciples said He was.
 - b. Peter said "thou art the Christ, the Son of the living God."
 - c. Jesus' response was that the Father had revealed that to him (16:17).
 - d. Jesus said that information came from God, who cannot lie (Hebrews 6:18).
 - e. Jesus fully acknowledged that He is the Son of God.
- C. Others gave witness to Jesus' claim that He was the Son of God.
 1. While He was on the cross, His enemies reviled Him with the statement "He said 'I am the Son of God.'" (Matthew 27:43).
 2. The Jews sought to kill Jesus because "He hath made Himself out to be the Son of God" (John 19:7).
- D. Jesus made recorded claims of being the Son of God.
 1. Jesus asked the formerly blind man if He believed on the Son of God (John 9:35-37).
 - a. The man asked who the Son of God was so that he could believe.
 - b. Jesus' response was it is He who is talking with you (it is Me).
 2. Jesus acknowledged calling Himself the "Son of God" (John 10:36).
- E. The inspired writers called Jesus the Son of God.
 1. Paul preached Jesus as the Son of God (Acts 9:20).
 2. The writer of Hebrews called Jesus the Son of God (Hebrews 6:6).
 3. John said believing Jesus is the Son of God is a requirement for salvation (I John 4:15).
- F. How does this prove Jesus is God?
 1. Because Jesus said He was the Son of God, the Jews accused Him of blasphemy.
 2. They said that He, a man, was making Himself out to be God (John 10:33).
 3. Being the "Son of" someone made you equal to that one.
 4. If you are the son of a Cobb, you are every bit as much a Cobb as your father.
 5. The claim of being the Son of God was the same as saying that He was deity.
 6. A side note, Jesus calling Himself the "Son of man" is saying He has the complete nature of humanity.

Conclusion:

1. The "Jehovah's Witnesses" claim that Jesus is not God, but that He still lived a perfect life.
2. Jesus taught that only God is worthy of worship, but also accepted worship for Himself.
3. Jesus taught that forgiveness comes from God, but also forgave sins.
4. Jesus claimed to be the Son of God, or deity.
5. Jesus claimed to be God by His words and His actions.
6. We ought to believe God rather than man!
7. Jesus is indeed God in the flesh (Matthew 1:21-23).
8. Jesus is God!
9. As such, everything Jesus taught is completely binding upon us all!
10. Have you obeyed Him?