

Who Is Jesus

Session 2: The Deity of Jesus

- How does the Bible teach that Jesus is divine?
- What does the Bible teach about the deity of Jesus?
- Why is it important for Jesus to be God?

As we look at what the Bible teaches about the deity of Jesus, we will focus on the New Testament. The main reasons are:

- In the doctrine of revelation, we discussed how we must interpret the Bible in its original context attempting to understand the author's intended message to the original audience. It is difficult to think that ancient Israelites had a Trinitarian conception of God or an understanding that the Messiah would be God in human form.
- In the doctrine of God, we discussed how the Old Testament does leave "conceptual space" for multiplicity in God and therefore a divine Savior. For example, the OT does tell us that God is ultimately the savior of His people, which does not contradict the possibility of the Son of God personally coming to save not just His people, but the entire world.

How does the Bible teach that Jesus is divine?

When we discussed the doctrine of revelation, we discussed how the Bible was written by people from a different culture from a different time who communicated in a way very different from modern Westerners.

Some people ask that if it is so important for us to know Jesus is God, why doesn't the New Testament just say "Jesus is God" repeatedly and add "this is really important to believe"? The New Testament does say this, but in a first-century, Eastern way and not a modern, Western way. It is not a "textbook" in a modern sense of the word.

The New Testament communicates truth largely through historical stories and letters written to specific people to address specific situations. Everything comes from people writing about life as they lived it. This kind of communication is very important in an oral culture. It is more memorable as the stories are retold, which means they are more accurate. Spoken words can communicate so much more than the written word. For example, how do we know the emotions behind the stories when we just read words on a page?

We need to interpret the Bible for what it is and resist the urge to interpret it as something that it is not.

What does the Bible teach about the deity of Jesus?

This is a survey of what the New Testament teaches about the deity of Jesus. The intent is to point you in the right direction for further study.

The deity of Christ in the Gospel of John

The Gospel of John has the highest incidence of examples of Scripture that point toward Jesus being divine. In fact, it is one of the main messages, and perhaps the main message, of the book.

Why did John write the book? Read John 20:30-31

- Purpose:
- Evidence:

How does the phrase “Son of God” help us understand the deity of Jesus?

Johannine prologue

From the very beginning of the Gospel of John, John is presenting Jesus as divine. What is known as the Johannine prologue makes the connection from eternity past to the incarnation. What does John say in this section that shows Jesus to be divine? (1:1-18)

“I AM” statements

John quotes Jesus as making multiple statements about Himself in which He uses the phrase “I AM.” How does this connect Jesus to God?

1. The Bread of Life (6:34)
2. Light of the world (8:12)
3. I AM WHO I AM (8:58)
4. The Good Shepherd (10:10)
5. The resurrection and the life (11:25)
6. The Word made flesh (12:47-50)

7. The Way, Truth, and Life (14:6)
8. The Vine (15:1)
9. I AM (18:4-5)

Ἐγώ εἰμι

יהוה

YHWH

Κύριος

Adonai

LORD

Oneness statements

1. 8:19
2. 10:30
3. 10:38
4. 14:9
5. 17
6. 5:17-38

Doing what only God can do

20:22

The witness of others

20:28

μονογενῆς

One and only – only begotten

Other NT support for the deity of the Son

Baptismal formula –

Matthew 28:18-20

Granville Sharpe's rule – Titus 2:13, 2 Peter 1:1

Rule: When a copulative connects two nouns of the same case that are of personal description, if the article precedes the first noun and not the second, the second applies to the first and is not describing a second person.

2 Corinthians 1:3, 11:31, Phil. 4:20, Col. 2:2, 1 Thess. 3:11, James 1:27 – God and Father

Titus 2:13, 2 Peter 1:1

This is always true when the words are personal, singular, and not proper names. It is true in most cases when the nouns are personal, plural, and not proper names.

Major Christological passages

Colossians 1:15-23

Philippians 2:5-11

Hebrews 1:1-12

Revelation 1:8, 22:12-13

Son of God

Luke 1:35

Matthew 3:17

Matthew 16:16

Matthew 27:54