



Q. Does the Bible really attest to the deity of Jesus?

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A. The Scriptures tell us exactly who Jesus claimed to be and they clearly present Christ as God. The names applied to Christ in the New Testament could properly be applied only to one who is God. For example, Jesus is called God in the phrase, 'Looking for the blessed hope and the appearing of the glory of our great God and Savior, Jesus Christ' (Titus 2:13; compare John 1:1; Hebrews 1:8; Romans 9:5; 1 John 5:20, 21). The Scriptures attribute characteristics to him that can be true only of God. Jesus is presented as being self-existent (John 1:4; 14:6); omnipresent (Matthew 28:20; 18:20); omniscient (John 4:16; 6:64; Matthew 17:22–27); omnipotent (Revelation 1:8; Luke 4:39–55; 7:14, 15; Matthew 8:26, 27); and possessing eternal life (1 John 5:11, 12, 20; John 1:4).

Most of the followers of Jesus were devout Jews who believed in one true God. They were monotheistic to the core, yet they recognized him as God incarnate. Because of his extensive rabbinical training, Paul would be even less likely to attribute deity to Jesus, to worship a man from Nazareth and call him Lord. But this is exactly what Paul did. He acknowledged Jesus as God when he said, 'Be on guard for yourselves and for all the flock, among which the Holy Spirit has made you overseers, to shepherd the church of God which He purchased with his own blood' (Acts 20:28).

There is Stephen, who while being stoned 'called upon the Lord and said, "Lord Jesus, receive my spirit!"' (Acts 7:59). The writer of Hebrews calls Jesus Christ God when he writes, 'But of the Son he says, "Thy throne, O God, is forever and ever"'

(Hebrews 1:8). John the Baptist announced the coming of Jesus by saying that 'the Holy Spirit descended upon him in bodily form like a dove, and a voice came out of the heaven, "You are My beloved Son, in you I am well-pleased"' (Luke 3:22).

The list of such Scriptures goes on, but by this point a critic may interject that all these references are from others about Christ, not from Christ himself. The insinuation might be that those at the time of Christ misunderstood him, as we are misunderstanding him today. In other words, Jesus really didn't claim to be God. Yet Christ's own claim to be God is derived directly from the pages of the New Testament. The references are abundant and their meaning is plain – points we will take up in a second article 'Did Jesus really claim to be God?'

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Scripture quotations are taken from the New American Standard Bible.

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