

“Behold The Man”

Introduction. Pilate said in John 19:5, when bringing Jesus before the people, “Behold the man!” The gospel begins with a person, Jesus of Nazareth. He was a man. He was born. He grew up. He worked. He suffered and died, just like other men. But the crucial question is was the carpenter of Nazareth the Son of God? If He is divine, the existence of God is proved and the character of God is revealed. If He was not God in human flesh, we are left with just another man-made religion with some beautiful ideas and noble ethics, but whose uniqueness is gone.

One of the earliest doctrinal discussions in the church centered around the nature of Christ and His relationship to God the Father. Was Jesus completely God or was He less than God? As the controversy grew, Emperor Constantine knew that some action had to be taken. Leading bishops met together and the result was the declaration of the Council of Nicaea in A.D. 325 that Jesus was “of one substance with the Father.”

What we think of Christ has become the battleground of the religious world, raging between Christians, Jews, Muslims, and Atheists. It is a question that demands an answer, so we will prove the deity of Jesus Christ from His claims and deeds.

I. He Talked As Though He Were Deity

- A. Jesus most commonly referred to Himself as the “Son of Man.”
 - 1. This expression refers to Daniel 7:13, and is understood to mean “the representative Man.”
 - 2. This expression emphasizes the humanity of Jesus, but implies His deity (Mark 10:45).
- B. His enemies recognized that He claimed to be the Son of God, and called it blasphemy.
 - 1. He identified Himself as the Son of God to the man who had been healed of blindness (John 9:35-38).
 - 2. He called God His Father after healing the man at the pool of Bethesda, and the Jews were outraged (John 5:18, 23).
 - 3. He said that He and the Father were one (John 10:33). If Jesus were not speaking the truth, His claims would be blasphemy.
- C. His references to Himself indicated He was aware of His uniqueness.
 - 1. Other religious leaders are self-effacing; He is self-advancing. They point away from themselves and say, “That is the truth, so far as I perceive it; follow that.” Jesus says, “I am the truth; follow me.”
 - 2. He saw Himself as the object of prophecy.
 - a) He said Isaiah and Moses had spoken of Him (Luke 4:16-21; John 5:46).
 - b) He claimed that the scriptures bore witness of Him (Luke 24:27, 44).
 - c) He used the divine designation, “I AM” and affirmed His eternal nature and divine character (John 8:58; Exodus 3:4).
 - 3. He invited and even commanded men to come to Him (Matthew 11:28-30; John 6:35; 7:37). His disciples recognized the right of Jesus to make demands of them. In their epistles, the apostles delighted to call themselves His slaves.

4. He made Himself out to be the proper object of man's faith and love (Matthew 10:37; Luke 14:26; John 3:36; 6:29; 8:24).
- D. His conversations are different from those of other men.
1. To the uninitiated, they appear to be quite self-centered (John 6:35; 8:12; 10:7, 14; 11:25-26; 14:6; 15:1). And, the self-centered teaching is uttered by one who taught humility in others.
 2. If Jesus were not who He claimed to be, He was either a wild egotist or insane. No preacher today would dare utter the kind of words as He.

II. He Acted As Though He Were Deity

- A. Jesus exercised power that no ordinary human being possesses.
1. He cleansed the lepers (Matthew 8:2-3).
 2. He held sway over the sea (Matthew 8:26).
 3. He fed 5,000 people with a meager amount of food (Matthew 14:15-21).
 4. He commanded the unclean spirits and they obeyed Him (Mark 1:27).
 5. He raised Lazarus from the dead (John 11:43-44).
- B. These miracles are "signs" of His deity. They were illustrations of His moral authority to forgive sins, and not performed to show off or compel submission.
1. The scribes admitted that only God can forgive sins (Mark 2:7).
 2. Jesus demonstrated His power to forgive sins by His power to heal the man who was sick of the palsy (Mark 2:9-11).
 3. The works of Jesus bear witness of Him (John 5:36; 20:30-31).
- C. The moral conduct of Jesus is evidence that He is in a class by Himself.
1. All have sinned but Jesus knew no sin (Romans 3:23; 1 Peter 2:22-23).
 2. He was tempted but yet He did not sin (Hebrews 4:15).
 3. He challenged His enemies to convict Him of sin but they could not (John 8:46). They watched Him and tried to catch Him in His words, but they had to hire false witnesses to testify against Him (Mark 3:2; 7:13; Matthew 26:60).
 4. Pilate proclaimed the Lord to be innocent (Matthew 27:24).
 5. Herod could find no fault with Jesus (Luke 23:15).
 6. The centurion in charge of the execution said He was innocent (Luke 23:47).
- D. The greatest evidence of His deity lies in His resurrection from the dead.
1. Paul stated that the Lord was declared to be the Son of God with power because of His resurrection (Romans 1:3-4).
 2. Peter preached that His resurrection fulfilled Psalm 16:8 and that the apostles were eyewitnesses to it (Acts 2:32). He called on the betrayers to know that Jesus was both Lord and Christ (Acts 2:36).
 3. The resurrection of Christ was a central theme in the preaching of the apostles (Acts 3:15; 10:36-43; 13:27-38).

Conclusion. What do you think of Christ? Was He merely another man? Was He a lunatic or was He the Son of God (John 20:28; 6:68)?

If He is the Son of God, He has all authority (Matthew 28:19); He is head of the church (Ephesians 1:22-23); and He is to judge the living and the dead (John 5:28-29; Acts 17:30-31). Consider the facts and obey Him!