

Is Jesus God? (part 4 of 4)

Description: The finale of a four part series discussing the biblical evidence that Jesus is not God.

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27. The Bible says twice that Jesus was accused of being God, but he denied it

According to the Bible, on only two instances the Jews opposed Jesus on the basis that he pretended to be God or equal with God. Had Jesus, may the mercy of God be upon him, claimed to be God, he is likely to have been opposed on this basis more frequently.

Because in these two instances, when charged, in the one case, with making himself God, and in the other, with making himself equal with God, he denied the charges. In reply to the charge of being an equal with God, he says immediately:

John 5:19, 30 "The son can do nothing of himself, but what he sees the Father do"; and directly after:

"I can of mine own self do nothing."

In answer to the charge of making himself God, he appeals to the Jews in substance thus: Your own Scriptures call Moses a god, and your magistrates gods; I am surely not inferior to them, yet I did not call myself God, but only the "son" of God (John 10:34-36).

This is unlikely to have been Jesus' actual response. Hastings in "The Dictionary of the Bible" says, "Whether Jesus used it of himself is doubtful." Grolier's encyclopedia, under the heading "Jesus Christ," says, "it is uncertain whether the Father/Son language (Mark 18:32; Matt. 11:25-27 par.; John passim) goes back to Jesus himself." A University of Richmond professor, Dr. Robert Alley, after considerable research into newly found ancient documents concludes that:

"...The (Biblical) passages where Jesus talks about the Son of God are later additions.... what the church said about him. Such a claim of deity for himself would not have been consistent with his entire lifestyle as we can reconstruct. For the first three decades after Jesus' death Christianity continued as a sect within Judaism. The first three decades of the existence of the church were within the synagogue. That would have been beyond belief if they (the followers) had boldly proclaimed the deity of Jesus."

Assuming Jesus did say that he was "son" of God. What did it mean? We first need to know the language of his people, the language of the Jews to whom he was speaking.

First, most people think there are no other verses that contradict or give equal divine sonship to other persons in the Old or New Testament. But according to the Bible God had quite a few "sons": Adam,^[1] Jacob is God's son and firstborn,^[2] Solomon^[3],

Ephraim[4] is God's firstborn, common people are called the sons of God.[5] All four Gospels record Jesus as saying, "*Blessed are the peace-makers; they will be called sons of God.*"

The word "son" cannot be accepted literally because in the Bible, God apparently addresses many of his chosen servants as "son" and "sons." The Hebrews believed God is One, and had neither wife nor children in any literal sense. Therefore, it is obvious the expression "son of God" merely meant "Servant of God"; one who, because of faithful service, was close and dear to God as a son is to his father. Christians who came from a Greek or Roman background, later misused this term. In their heritage, "son of God" signified an incarnation of a god or someone born of a physical union between male and female gods. This can be seen in Acts 14: 11-13, where we read that when Paul and Barnabas preached in a city of Turkey, pagans claimed they were gods incarnate. They called Barnabas the Roman god Zeus, and Paul the Roman god Hermes.

Furthermore, the New Testament Greek word translated as "son" are "pias" and "paida" which mean "servant," or "son in the sense of servant." These are translated to "son" in reference to Jesus and "servant" in reference to all others in some translations of the Bible. So, consistent with other verses, Jesus was merely saying that he is God's servant.

Additional Problems with Trinity

To a Christian, God had to take human form to understand temptation and human suffering, but the concept is not based on any clear words of Jesus. In contrast, God does not need to be tempted and suffer in order to be able to understand and forgive man's sins, for He is the all knowing Creator of man. This is expressed in the verse:

Exodus 3:7 "And the Lord said: 'I have surely seen the affliction of My people that are in Egypt, and I have heard their cry because of their taskmasters; for I know their pains.'"

God forgave sin before Jesus' appearance, and He continues to forgive without any assistance. When a believer sins, he may come before God in sincere repentance to receive forgiveness. Indeed, the offer to humble oneself before God and be saved is made to all humankind.

Isaiah 45:21-22, "And there is no God else beside Me; a just God and a Savior; there is none beside Me. Look to Me, and be saved, all the ends of the earth; for I am God, and there is none else."

Biblically, people can receive forgiveness of sins through sincere repentance sought directly from God. This is true at all times and in all places. There has never been a need for the so-called intercessionary role Jesus plays in attaining atonement. The facts speak for themselves. There is no truth to the Christian belief that Jesus died for our sins and salvation is only through Jesus. What about the salvation of people before Jesus? Jesus' death brings neither atonement from sin, nor is it in any way a fulfillment of biblical prophecy.

Christians claim that in the birth of Jesus, there occurred the miracle of the

incarnation of God in the form of a human being. To say that God became truly a human being invites a number of questions. Let us ask the following about the man-God Jesus.

What happened to his foreskin after his circumcision (Luke 2:21)? Did it ascend to heaven, or did it decompose as with any human piece of flesh? During his lifetime what happened to his hair, nails, and blood shed from wounds? Did the cells of his body die as in ordinary human beings? If his body did not function in a truly human way, he could not be truly human as well as truly God. Yet, if his body functioned exactly in a human way, this would nullify any claim to divinity. It would be impossible for any part of God, even if incarnate, to decompose in any way and still be considered God. The everlasting, one God, in whole or in part, does not die, disintegrate, or decompose:

Malachi 3:6 "For I the Lord do not change."

Did Jesus' flesh dwell in safety after his death? Unless Jesus' body never underwent "decay" during his lifetime he could not be God, but if it did not undergo "decay" then he was not truly human.

Endnotes:

[1] "Adam, which was the son of God." (Luke 3:38)

[2] "Israel is my son, even my firstborn." (Exodus 4:22)

[3] "I will be his father, and he shall be my son." (2 Samuel 7:13-14)

[4] "for I am a father to Israel, and Ephraim is my firstborn." (Jeremiah 31:9)

[5] "Ye are the children of the Lord your God" (Deuteronomy 14:1)

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