

# Jesus is God/and Lord

Many people, including some uninformed Christians & Muslims, will tell you that Muslims & Christians worship the same God. Yet when is the last time you heard of a Muslim worshipping Jesus? From the earliest days, Christians, who suffered excruciating deaths rather than worship any but the True God, preached the worship of Jesus. How ironic, if they died rather than commit idolatry, yet they were committing idolatry the whole time. Countless Muslims, brave in battle, who through the ages fought & died because Mohammed said to fight Jihads against Christian nations & “other” polytheists. How ironic if, in the name of worshipping God, they struggled so long to shut down the places of worship for worshippers of God.

Satan must have misled one group. Either Jesus is God, and Muslims have been fiendishly misled, dying in battle needlessly. Or else, Jesus is not God, and Christians have been fiendishly misled being killed for their faith, even by Muslims, in vain. Do you agree that one must be fundamentally wrong? If God did in fact reveal Himself, either through the preserved teachings of Jesus, or the preserved teachings of Mohammed, how could an objective person tell which was true? This paper proposes a way, but first I have to acknowledge three things to you.

**Three Admissions** 1) Jesus, in the early part of His earthly ministry, didn't claim to be God. Imagine an unknown teacher, appearing in the midst of the monotheistic Jews, spouting off this claim, with no evidence nor explanation. No, it was only later in His ministry, that Jesus actually said that He is God. 2) It is not sufficient to show that Jesus claimed to be God. Otherwise people could define that title in a variety of ways. Rather, we also have to show that He was God in the sense of accepting worship, that He claimed to be equal in honor with God the Father, & was One with God the Father, versus a separate or lesser god. 3) Since most Muslims question the reliability of the gospels' recording of Jesus' Words, corroborating evidence from the early followers of Jesus, & even what non-Christians said about Christians, is important to build an “ironclad” case.

**Jesus' Own Words That He is God** Let's ignore for now some of the plain statements about Jesus, such as John 1:1 “The Word was God”, since they were said by others not in His presence. This still leaves a number of places for us to consider. **Jesus Himself said He was God** in John 8:58. Jesus answered, “before Abraham was born, I am!” The word “I am,” was the divine name of God, used countless times in the Old Testament. This word “YHWH” in Hebrew, is explained as the “personal name” of God in Exodus 3:14-15, 20:5; Isaiah 42:8; 44:6, this personal name of God has been lost to Muslims. Now the Jews either understood Jesus' communication correctly when they picked up stones to stone Him, or else they misunderstood Jesus' communication. Jesus could have said “there is a mistake here, you misunderstand me. I do not claim to be God like you say.” However, there is no record of Jesus ever saying there was any mistake. On the contrary, we have records of the apostles, as well as their disciples, reiterating that Jesus is God.

**The Jew's responded directly to Jesus' claim** in John 10:33: “We are not stoning you for any of these”, replied the Jews, “but for blasphemy, because you, a mere man, claim to be God.” Jesus replied to them that 1) Since Scripture called non-divine being “gods” in Psalm 82:6-7, how much more fitting it is to call the One uniquely set apart as God's Son. 2) Even if you will not believe Jesus' words alone, at least consider the miracles to understand that the Father is in Jesus and Jesus is in the Father. **On other occasions** the scribes and Pharisees wanted to stone Jesus because He claimed to be God. Now imagine a godly person being accused, on multiple occasions, of a wicked crime he did not commit. Imagine him barely escaping some times, but every single time, he never denied that he committed the crime. Can you imagine this? - I cannot. Yet that is what some critics think Jesus did for the crime of blasphemy in claiming to be God.

**Negative affirmation:** Jesus said of the Pharisees, “if you do not believe that I am the One I claim to be, you will indeed die in your sins.” John 8:24b.

**Positive affirmation of Thomas:** Thomas the disciple called Jesus God in John 20:28. Thomas even went further than that. John 20:28 actually says that Thomas said to Jesus, “My Lord and my God!” Je-

sus replied to Thomas, “Because you have seen me, you have believed; blessed are those who have not seen and yet have believed.” Jesus has no hint of rebuke toward Thomas. Indeed, the only remotely negative thing Jesus said is that those who have not seen Jesus in person and believe (this about Jesus) are more blessed than those who have seen Jesus and believe this. Now either **a)** Thomas was wrong, and he sinned by calling Jesus God, and perhaps Jesus sinned by accepting this and not rebuking Thomas, or **b)** Jesus was right to affirm what Thomas said. Do you agree that either: They were both right, or that Thomas and Jesus were both wrong?

**Jesus would send His angels** in Matthew 13:41, which are the angels of God (Luke 12:8-9; 15:10). **Jesus said he would judge the world** (Matthew 24:31-46, 25:31-3; John 5:21-22, 27). Yet is God who is coming to judge the world (Psalm 50:1-6; Joel 3:12; Deuteronomy 32:35)

At Jesus' trial for blasphemy before the Sanhedrin, they could have let him go. All Jesus had to do was say “I am not God, people thinking I was God is a mistake.” Yet Jesus never said that, and the trial continued. **“All that belongs to the Father is mine.”** John 16:15a. Now it is easy to understand someone saying “All that belongs to me I give to God”, but Jesus says, “All that belongs to the Father is mine.” I have never heard anyone explain how this could be a true statement and Jesus not be God. A non-Christian might wonder if these were added much later. However, an ancient Bible manuscript called the Bodmer II papyrii (125-175 A.D.), has preserved John 1:1-6:11; 6:35b-14:26; 14:29-30; 15:2-26; 16:2-4, 6-7; 16:10-20:20; 20:22-23; 20:25-21:9; 21:12,17.

**Jesus Accepted Worship** Jesus Himself told Satan that no one should be worshipped and served except God (Matthew 4:10 and Luke 4:8). Yet... **Jesus accepted worship.** Only God should be worshipped, and Jesus was showing that He was God. In John 9:38 when Jesus spoke to the (formerly) blind man a second time, Jesus asked him “Do you believe in the Son of God?” The man asked who He was? Jesus said “You have both seen Him and it is He who is talking with you.” Then the man said “Lord, I believe!” and he worshipped Him. Jesus affirmed Him for his belief, and criticized the Jews

who did not believe. Also note that Jesus did not ask if the man believed in God; Jesus asked the man if He believed in the Son of God. **From a leper** Jesus accepted worship (Matt. 8:2) **The women at the tomb** worshipped Jesus, clasping his feet, in Matthew 28:9 **God sent the wise men to worship Jesus** (Matthew 2:2), and we should worship too. **The disciples of Jesus**, after Jesus walked on water, worshipped Him in Matt. 14:33. None of the disciples ever heard Jesus say this was wrong. **After Jesus rose from the dead, the disciples** worshipped Him in Luke 24:52 and Matt.28:17. **Against this**, the angel of God refused to allow anyone to worship him (the angel) in Revelation 19:10 and 22:8-9. Likewise, Paul and Barnabas refused worship of themselves in Acts 14:11-16.

Either Jesus sinned in accepting worship, or else He was correct in doing so.

**Jesus Demonstrated That He was God** Jesus had authority over demons and Jesus said His miracles spoke for him (John 10:25). The Old Testament prophesied of Jesus. Jesus also said that no one came to the Father except through Him (John 14:6; 6:45; ~8:24) However, many Muslims might agree with these things about Jesus, without it proving that Jesus is God. **Jesus made Himself equal with God** **a)** Jesus said we are to honor the Son just as we honor the Father (John 5:23) **b)** Request for prayer in Jesus' name John 14:13-14; 15:7 **c)** The Father and Jesus “own” all in common. John 16:15;17:10. **d)** On earth the Father lived in Jesus. Jn. 0:38;14:10-11. **e)** On earth Jesus was in the Father. John 10:38;14:11 **f)** If you really know Jesus, then you know the Father and have seen the Father. Jn. 14:7-9 Jesus said, “I and the Father are one” in Jn. 10:30. **Jesus had authority**, for he said, “You have heard it said, ... but I say to you” (Matthew 5:21-22, 78-78) **Jesus can meet our needs** in a way that only God can. “If any man is thirsty, let Him come to Me and drink” in John 7:37. See also John 4:14. Jesus gave His peace to us; He did not say the Father's peace in John 14:27. In John 6:35 Jesus said He was the bread of life. Jesus said for us to “believe also in Me.” In John 14:1b. Do you believe in Jesus? See also John 11:25. Jesus said for all who are weary and heavy-laden to come to Him in Matthew 11:28. This offer is still available today, so come to Jesus.

The Bodmer 14/15 papyri, also called p75, was written 175-225 A.D. It contains most of Luke and John. Specifically, it contains Luke 3:18-22; 3:33-4:2; 4:34-5:10; 5:37-6:4; 6:10-7:32; 7:35-39,41-43; 7:46-9:2; 9:4-17:15; 17:19-18:18; 22:4 24:53. It also has John 1:1-11:45; 11:48-57; 12:3-13:1; 13:8-9; 14:8-29; 15:7-8.

**Jesus Forgave Sins Against God** Only God can forgive sins, and Jesus forgave sins against God, then Jesus was showing that He was God in Matthew 9:2-6; Mark 2:5-12, and Luke 5:20-23. Jesus first said to the paralytic “Son, your sins are forgiven you.” The scribes said Jesus was speaking blasphemy, because no one can forgive sins but God alone. Jesus did not contradict their statement. He merely asked a question: “Why do you reason about these things in your hearts? Which is easier, to say to the paralytic, ‘your sins are forgiven you,’ or to say, ‘Arise, take up your bed and walk? But that you may know that the Son of Man has power on earth to forgive sins’ - He said to the paralytic, ‘I say to you, arise, take up your bed, and go to your house.’ And immediately the paralytic rose up and did that! Jesus did one of two things: **a)** Showed He was God by proving His power, **b)** Deliberately misled them to believe that He was God when He was not. The question for us is that since this is how Jesus taught and led, do we trust Jesus to follow where He leads or not?

Now someone might reason that perhaps Jesus was merely pronouncing God’s forgiveness, rather than forgiving sins against God on His own authority. However, note that Jesus said “But that you may know that the Son of Man has power on earth to forgive sins”. So Jesus said it was He who had the power, and he was not just announcing that the Father forgave. In Luke 7:48-50, Jesus also told the woman who anointed His feet “Your sins are forgiven.” Those who sat with Him said, “Who is this who even forgives sins?” Notice what they “did” to get forgiveness. They did not wash themselves enough times, pray enough prayers, pay enough money, or cross enough burning deserts. All they did was come to Jesus, and He freely gave them forgiveness.

**The Rest of the New Testament** The gospels and the rest of the New Testament shows that Jesus’ fol-

lowers were taught that Jesus was God. **a)** Jesus and the Father have the same nature (Phil. 2:5) **b)** Both are rightfully worshipped (Hebrews 1:6) **c)** Both rightfully called God (Jn 1:1; Heb 1:8,9) **d)** Both are prayed to (Acts 7:7:59-60) **e)** Everything in the world was created through Christ (John 1:3, 10, Colossians 1:16) **f)** Everything is sustained through Christ (Col 1:17) **g)** The fullness of deity is in Jesus (Col. 1:19). **h)** Jesus is called God in 2 Corinthians 11:3 & Titus 2:13 **i)** Worshipped in Heaven in Revelation 5:8-9

### Common Names in the Two Testaments

Isaiah 7:14 says there would be one born called Emmanuel, that is, “God with us”. Psalm 110:1 says, “The Lord said to my Lord...”. Who is this Lord who was prophesied about 1,000 years before Jesus? By the way, this is one of the most quoted Old Testament verses in the New Testament. This is an unsolvable mystery to Muslims as it is to Jews. Jesus answered this riddle, by saying it referred to himself. A Muslim might wonder if these parts were a later addition. However, not only do Suras 5:46-48, 3:48 show that Jesus was taught the Torah and confirmed God’s Word, but the Dead Sea Scrolls include many copies of the Old Testament from the time of Jesus. The Old Testament also had many names for God, and this section proves the New Testament applied these names to Jesus. The John Rylands manuscript has John 18:37-38, where Christ says before Pilate that He is a king. It is dated 117-138 A.D.

**What Other Followers of Jesus Taught** Apart from early New Testament manuscripts, we have another witness of Jesus’ teaching, the writings of the early church. Here is what 14 of them taught up through 313 A.D. **Ignatius** (died 107 or 116 A.D.) wrote frequently of Christ as God. For example, he wrote of “the blood of God” in chapter 1 of his letter to the Ephesians. **Letter to Diognetus** (c.130 A.D.) a disciple of the apostles (chapter 100 in his *Letter to Diognetus* chapter 7 wrote of Christ sent as King, God, man, and savior. **Justin Martyr** (wrote about 135-165 A.D.) “The Word of Wisdom, who is Himself this God begotten of the Father of all things, ...” *Dialogue with Trypho* ch. 61. See ch.55,56,59,62-64,66,74-78.

**Melito of Sardis** (died 180 A.D.) said of the crucifixion that “God is murdered”. **Theophilus, bishop**

**of Antioch** (168-181/188 A.D.) “For the divine writing itself teaches us that Adam said that he had heard the voice. But what else is this voice but the Word of God, who is also His Son?” *Letter to Autolycus* 2:22 **Irenaeus** (182-188 A.D.) wrote in *Against Heresies* 3:19:2, “Jesus is Himself in His own right, ...God, and Lord, ...” **Hippolytus** (225-235/6 A.D.) in *Against the Heresy of One Noetus* mentioned “Son of God who, being God, became man.” **Tertullian** (200-220/240 A.D.) “The Word, therefore, is both always in the Father, as He says, ‘I am in the Father;’ and is always with God, according to what is written, ‘And the Word was with God;’ and never separate from the Father, or other than the Father, since ‘I and the Father are one.’” *Against Praxeus* chapter 8. **Cyprian** (246-258 A.D.) mentions “Jesus Christ, our God and Lord” in *Treatise 9.6 on the Advantage of Patience* p.485 **Bishop Nemesianus of Thubunae** mentions that “our Lord Jesus Christ spoke with His divine voice” *The Seventh Council of Carthage* (258 A.D.) p.566 **Gregory Thaumaturgus** (240-265 A.D.) calls Jesus “God the Word” in *Oration and Panegyric Addressed to Origen* argument 4 p.24. **Dionysius of Alexandria** (246-265 A.D.) mentions the Son as being the brightness of eternal Light, and “He Himself also is absolutely eternal” The Son “co-exists with him, in that, existing without a beginning, and always begotten, He always shines before Him.” *Letter 4 - to Dionysius Bishop of Rome* ch.4 p.92. Also “Christ is consubstantial with God.” *ibid* ch.6 p.92 **Dionysius of Rome** (259-269 A.D.) has an entire work (1 1/5 pages) on how Christ, the Word is united with the Holy Spirit and God the Father. “For it is essential that the Divine Word should be united to the God of all, and that the Holy Spirit should abide and dwell in God; and thus that the Divine Trinity should be reduced and gathered into one, as if into a certain head – that is, into the omnipotent God of all.” *Against the Sabellians* p.365-365 **Theognostus of Alexandria** (260 A.D.) teaches how the Son is born of the substance of the Father, as the reflection of light or as the steam of water”. He said Jesus was not the Father, but an emanation from the substance of the Father with no partition. “For as the sun remains the same and suffers no diminution from the rays that are poured from it, so neither did the substance of the Father undergo any change in having the Son

as an image of itself.” *Seven Books of Hypotyposes or Outlines* ch.1 p.155.

**Proof from even Non-Christians that Christians Taught Jesus is God** Even the enemies of Christianity bear witness that Christians worshipped Jesus as God. **Pliny the Younger** (governor and persecutor of Christians in 112 A.D.) “They [Christians] were in the habit of meeting on a certain fixed day before it was light, when they sang in alternate verses a hymn to Christ, as to a god, and bound themselves by a solemn oath, not to do any wicked deeds...” **Lucian** (2nd century satirist) “The Christians, you know, worship a man to this day - the distinguished personage who introduced their novel rites, and was crucified on that account... You see, these misguided creatures...” (*Death of Peregrine* 11) This is significant, because an official Roman query states that Christians worshipped Christ as God as early as 112 A.D. Thus, if a Muslim wishes to say that worshipping Jesus as God was an “error” introduced later, this was introduced prior to 112 A.D. By the way, the apostle John wrote the book of John around 90 A.D., and he lived a while after that. Again, the first fragment of John we have today that mentions Christ as a king (an un-Islamic term) is the John Rylands fragment, 117-138 A.D.

**Conclusion** Early Bible manuscripts show, and the writings of followers and even foes of Christ confirm, that Jesus taught that He was God, demonstrated He was God, and accepted worship. The evidence stretches from c.112 A.D., up through Mohammed’s time, when ‘Aisha reports that Mohammed was taught the Gospels in Arabic (*Bukhari* vol.4:605; *Sahih Muslim* 1:301 p.98). Jesus was taught the Gospel according to Sura 3:48, and Christians are the people of the Gospel in Sura 5:46. (Bible quotes are from the NIV).

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