

The Real Jesus

by Servetus the Evangelical

Jesus of Nazareth is the most famous man who ever lived. But who was He? To learn about His identity we must turn to the Bible. The New Testament presents Jesus as a seer-prophet, a teaching rabbi, an itinerant preacher, a wisdom sage, a charismatic healer, a miracle worker, and an exorcist. It applies to Him the titles Messiah/Christ, Son of Man, Son of God, Savior, and Lord. It asserts that He was born of a virgin, lived a sinless life in obedience to God, and died on a cross at the hands of sinful men. Yet Jesus' death was in accordance with God's plan as atonement for the sins of others. Those who believe these things about Jesus, God will forgive them of all of their sins and give them eternal life.

The New Testament also claims that God vindicated Jesus by literally raising Him from the dead. It reveals that for the next forty days Jesus literally appeared to many of His disciples, after which He ascended from their midst into heaven. Then God exalted Jesus by inviting Him to sit with Him on His throne. The New Testament also reveals that Jesus will return to earth someday, bringing with Him the promised and glorious kingdom. Then God will bring about the resurrection of His deceased people as well as judgment day.

During the next three centuries, the Church adhered faithfully to these scriptural teachings about Jesus. But in the fourth and fifth centuries, the institutional (Catholic) Church added that Jesus was not only a man but also fully God by possessing two natures: a fully human nature and a divine nature, the latter called "the deity of Christ." Through its councils and creeds, the Church pronounced that if anyone did not believe that Jesus was fully God—co-equal and co-eternal with God the Father and the Holy Spirit, calling these three "the Trinity"—that person did not truly believe in Jesus and thus was not a genuine Christian. Roman Catholic, Greek Orthodox, and Protestant church denominations still officially embrace these additional proclamations, asserting that they reflect the New Testament.

On the contrary, when the Catholic Church identified Jesus as God, it departed from the fundamental, biblical, Judeo-Christian teaching that God is "one," called "monotheism." It happened because, when the Church expanded into Gentile lands, it gradually (1) became somewhat anti-Semitic, (2) abandoned the established principle of using only scriptural terms and categories in order to identify Jesus, (3) went beyond Scripture by introducing Greek metaphysics into theology in order to identify Jesus more precisely, and therefore (4) interpreted Jesus' status as "the Son of God" metaphysically, thereby making this title synonymous with the word "God," rather than comprehending Jesus being Son of God in a Jewish context, in which it means one specially favored by God to be Israel's Messiah.

Jesus is not God because of the following biblical evidence or lack thereof:

There is *no* New Testament evidence that Jesus ever *thought* that He was God.

There is *no* New Testament evidence that Jesus ever *claimed* that He was God.

There *is* New Testament evidence that Jesus *denied* that He claimed to be God.

At Jesus' examination before the Sanhedrin, He was *never* accused of *claiming* to be God.

The Bible *regularly* distinguishes between God and Jesus as two separate individuals.

The New Testament *constantly* interchanges the words "God" and "the Father."

The New Testament *repeatedly* identifies "God" *exclusively* as "the Father."

The New Testament contains *no* unambiguous statement such as "Jesus (Christ) is God."

In the synoptic gospels and the book of Acts, Jesus clearly is *never* identified as "God."

Thus, in the evangelistic sermons in the book of Acts, Jesus is *never* proclaimed as "God."

Jesus cannot be God because Jesus said concerning Himself:

“Why do you call Me good? No one is good except God alone” (Mark 10:18).¹

“the Son can do nothing of Himself” (John 5:19, cf. v. 30).

“You,... make Yourself out to be God.” “I said, ‘I am the Son of God’” (John 10:33, 36).

“The Father is greater than I” (John 14:28).

“Father,... the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom Thou hast sent” (John 17:1, 3).

“Jesus said to her, ‘I ascend to My Father ... and My God and your God’” (John 20:17).

Jesus cannot be God because of the following additional Scriptures:

Jesus was visible but God is “invisible” (John 1:18; 6:46; 1 Timothy 1:17; 6:16).

Jesus was approachable but God “dwells in unapproachable light” (1 Timothy 6:16).

Jesus was tempted but “God cannot be tempted” (Mark 1:13 par.; James 1:13).

Jesus died on a cross but God is “immortal” and thus cannot die (1 Timothy 1:17; 6:16).

Jesus said that the Father is “the one and only God” (John 5:44).

Jesus said on the cross, “My God, My God, WHY HAST THOU FORSAKEN ME” (Matt 27:46).

Paul wrote that “God ... is one” and “the only wise God” (Romans 3:30; 16:27).

Paul wrote that the Father is “the only God” “and only Sovereign” (1 Timothy 1:17; 6:15).

Peter could not have believed that Jesus was God because he distinguished the two:

“Jesus the Nazarene, a man attested to you by God with miracles and wonders and signs which God performed through Him in your midst” (Acts 2:22).

“Rulers and elders of the people,... Jesus Christ the Nazarene, whom you crucified, whom God raised from the dead” (Acts 4:10).

“God has made Him both Lord and Christ—this Jesus whom you crucified” (Acts 2:36).

“You know of Jesus of Nazareth, how God anointed Him with the Holy Spirit and with power, and how He went about doing good, and healing all who were oppressed by the devil; for God was with Him” (Acts 10:38).

Paul the monotheist could not have believed that Jesus was God because he wrote:

“For there is one God, and one mediator also between God and men, the man Christ Jesus” (1 Timothy 2:5).

“There is no God but one.... yet for us there is but one God, the Father, from whom are all things, and we exist for Him; and one Lord, Jesus Christ, by whom are all things, and we exist through Him” (1 Corinthians 8:6).

“There is ... one Lord, one faith, one baptism, one God and Father” (Ephesians 4:4-6).

“The God and Father of our/the Lord Jesus Christ” (2 Corinthians 1:3; 11:31).

“Christ belongs to God” because “God is the head of Christ” (1 Corinthians 3:23; 11:3).

“God was in Christ reconciling the world to Himself” (2 Corinthians 5:19).

“Grace to you and peace from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ” (salutations 6x).

Jesus cannot be God because of the following logical reasons:

If Jesus did miracles by means of a divine nature, the Father *did not* do the works of Jesus.

If Jesus’ ability to do miracles was intrinsic, He did not *need* the power of the Holy Spirit.

God is totally self-sufficient, but Jesus *needed* the miracle-working power of God’s Spirit.

There is *no* biblical evidence that Jesus had two natures and wills, which is non-human.

God *transcends* His creation, so that being God is *incompatible* with being human.

God foreknows the yet future date of Jesus’ return to earth, but Jesus *did not* know it.

¹ All Scripture quotations are from the New American Standard Bible.

Thus, the New Testament *does not* teach that Jesus was God but that God *sent* Jesus,² God was *with* Jesus,³ God was *in* Jesus,⁴ and God *raised* Jesus from the dead. The traditional view that Jesus is God is based mostly on only a few biblical texts.⁵ Most of these texts have grammatical problems, and Bible versions often differ as to whether they call Jesus “God.” Some are properly interpreted to mean *God was in Christ*. In sum, Jesus was not God but a virgin-born man who endured temptation, suffering, shame, trial, and death to provide salvation, and God vindicated and exalted Him for it. Praise Jesus and His God!

Get the extensive, well-researched book by Servetus the Evangelical entitled *The Restitution of Jesus Christ*. Learn about it and his pseudonym at www.ServetusTheEvangelical.com, and purchase it and this tract there. Servetus the Evangelical has been a devout Evangelical all of his adult life and is a former Trinitarian. At this website, he will provide a clue to his identity on the first day of every month until late 2011. Then, on the 500th anniversary of the birth of Michael Servetus—who was burnt at the stake for alleged heresies—this author will reveal his identity in a new book that tells the intriguing story about his quest for the real Jesus.

² It is stated over forty times in the Gospel of John that God “sent,” or did “send,” Jesus.

³ John 8:29; 16:32; Acts 10:38; cf. John 1:1-2.

⁴ John 10:38; 14:10-11; 17:21; 2 Corinthians 5:19.

⁵ The most prominent are the following: Isaiah 9:6; John 1:1, 18; 5:18; 10:30-38; 20:28; Romans 9:5; Philippians 2:6-7; 2 Thessalonians 1:12; Titus 2:13; Hebrews 1:8; 2 Peter 1:1; 1 John 5:20.