

The Son of God(1)

“You are the Christ, the Son of the living God”

Matt. 16:16

- 1. Jesus claimed to be just like God the Father**
 - a. He acts just like his heavenly Father (John 5:17-18)
 - b. He offers an earthly view of the heavenly Father (John 14:8-9)

- 2. Jesus claimed to possess the divine authority of God the Father**
 - a. He has the authority to forgive sins against God (Mark 2:5-11; Luke 7:48-49)
 - b. He will be given the authority to pronounce eternal judgment (John 5:21-29)
 - 1) To remove a sinful church (Rev. 2:1, 5)
 - 2) To inflict suffering and death (Rev. 2:12, 16)
 - 3) To judge the heart of man (Rev. 2:18, 23)

- 3. Jesus claimed to possess the eternal nature of God the Father**
 - a. He shares this most unique and distinctive aspect of God’s nature (John 8:58-59)
 - 1) The ability to always be present as “I Am” (Exod. 3:13-14)
 - 2) A quality so distinct that nothing within creation can compare (Isa. 46:9-10; 1 Tim. 6:15-16)
 - b. He always has been and always will be (Rev. 1:17; 2:8; 22:13)

- 4. Jesus claimed to be one with God the Father**
 - a. He is “one” with everything we associate with the being of God (John 10:30-33)
 - 1) More than just a figurative “son of God” (John 10:34-35)
 - 2) He actually comes to earth from the Father’s heavenly throne (John 10:36)
 - b. He affirmed his divine relationship with God even to his death (Luke 22:67-71; John 19:7-8)

The Fullness of God(2)

“For in Christ all the fullness of the Deity lives in bodily form”
Col. 2:9

1. The Apostles testified to Jesus’ deity

- a. Jesus belongs in the exclusive category of deity (Gal. 1:1)
- b. Jesus is essential to Trinitarian statements (Matt. 28:19; 1 Cor. 12:4-6; 2 Cor. 1:21-22; 13:14; Eph. 4:4-6; 1 Pet. 1:2)
 - 1) A parallel position with God the Father and the Holy Spirit
 - 2) With no ontological hierarchy or disparity
- c. Jesus possesses the full nature of God (Col. 2:9; Heb. 1:3)
- d. Jesus is worthy of being called “God” (John 1:1; 20:28-31)

2. The messianic prophecies foretold Jesus’ deity

- a. The Messiah would wear divine titles (Isa. 9:6)
- b. The Messiah would be “the Son of God” (Luke 1:32, 35)

3. The early church fathers believed in Jesus’ deity

“For our God, Jesus the Christ, was conceived by Mary, in God’s plan being sprung both from the seed of David and from the Holy Spirit.” (Ignatius, *Ephesians*, 18:2)

“Our God Jesus Christ, indeed, has revealed himself more clearly by returning to the Father.” (Ignatius, *Romans*, 3:3)

“I bid you farewell as always in our God, Jesus Christ.” (Ignatius, *Letter to Polycarp*, 8:3)

“[The Jews do not know that] the Father of the universe has a Son, who being the Word and First-begotten of God is also divine.” (Justin Martyr, *First Apology*, 63)

“. . . so that every knee may bow, of things in heaven and on earth and under the earth, to Christ Jesus our Lord and God and Saviour and King, according to the pleasure of the invisible Father . . .” (Irenaeus, *Against Heresies*, 1.10.1)

“For as God lives, and as the Lord Jesus Christ lives and the Holy Spirit . . .” (Clement of Rome, *1 Clement*, 58:2)

“Make a real effort, then, to stand firmly by the orders of the Lord and the apostles, so that ‘whatever you do, you may succeed’ in body and soul, in faith and love, in Son, Father, and Spirit . . .” (Ignatius, *Magnesians*, 13:1)

The Word of God(3)

1. Jesus was pre-existent with God

- a. Before creation existed
 - 1) Already existing “in the beginning” (John 1:1-2)
 - 2) Creating all things *ex nihilo* (John 1:3; Col. 1:15-17; Heb. 1:2-3)
- b. Beyond all created things
 - 1) Distinct from creation
 - 2) Fully equal with God (Phil. 2:5-6)
 - 3) Sharing God’s glory and power (John 17:5)

2. Jesus was active in Old Testament history

- a. Through theophany appearances
 - 1) The Angel of the Lord
 - a) The messenger (*malak*) of God
 - b) Referred to as “God” (Gen. 16:10; 22:11-12; 31:11-13; Gen. 32:30; 48:15-16; Exod. 3:2-4; Judges 13:21-22; Hosea 12:3-5)
 - c) Perhaps an Old Testament parallel to the New Testament “Word of God”
 - 2) The Captain of the Lord’s host (Joshua 5:13-6:2)
 - a) The ground before him was “holy ground” and he spoke as “the LORD”
 - b) Perhaps an Old Testament parallel to the New Testament depiction of Jesus as the leader of the armies of heaven (Eph. 1:20-22; Rev. 19:14)
 - 3) The fourth man in the fire (Dan. 3:24-25, 28)
- b. Through messianic types
 - 1) Melchizedek (Gen. 14:18-20)
 - 2) The rock in the wilderness (1 Cor. 10:4)

3. Jesus is God’s ultimate revelation

- a. God’s greatest Word (Heb. 1:1-2)
- b. God’s final Word
 - 1) God’s agent of judgment (John 5:22-23)
 - 2) The manifestation of God’s wrath (Rev. 19:11-16)
 - a) Wearing the title “the Word of God”
 - b) With a sword coming from his mouth

The Image of Man(4)

“He made himself nothing . . . being made in human likeness.”
Phil. 2:7

1. Jesus became like us

- a. The Son of God lived like a man for 33 years
 - 1) An “incarnation” among men (John 1:14; Col. 2:9)
 - 2) With our full human nature (Heb. 2:14, 17)
- b. To imagine anything less is an “antichrist” heresy (1 John 4:2-3; 2 John 7)
 - 1) Only a human appearance (Docetism)
 - 2) Only a human body (Apollinarianism)

2. Jesus acted like us

- a. He did not display his divine glory (John 17:5)
- b. He did not exercise his divine authority and prerogatives
- c. He did not use his infinite powers: omnipresence, omniscience, omnipotence
 - 1) He did not know everything (Matt. 24:36), only that which he learned, observed, and received as revelation
 - 2) His miraculous powers were given to him by the Holy Spirit for his ministry as Messiah (Luke 4:1, 14, 17-21; 5:17; Acts 2:22; 10:38)
- d. He did not use his eternal (indestructible) power of life
- e. He restrained his own divine rights and powers (Phil. 2:7-8)

3. Jesus lived like us

- a. Physical birth
- b. Physical, mental, social, and spiritual growth (Luke 2:40, 52)
- c. Hunger and thirst (Matt. 4:2; 21:18; John 19:28)
- d. Fatigue and sleep (Matt. 8:24; John 4:6)
- e. Physical death
- f. Imagine: recreation, sickness

4. Jesus felt like us

- a. Friendship love (John 11:3, 5; 15:13-15)
- b. Pleasure and joy (Matt. 7:3; 19:24; 23:24; Luke 10:17, 21; John 1:47)
- c. Anger and frustration (Mark 3:5; 8:12; 10:14)
- d. Sorrow and tears (Isa. 52:3; Matt. 14:13; John 11:35)
- e. Anxiety and uneasiness (Matt. 26:37; John 11:33; 12:27; 13:21)

The Son of Man(5)

“I see heaven open and the Son of Man standing at the right hand of God”

Acts 7:56

1. Jesus was born of God and man

- a. A virgin birth
 - 1) A miraculous conception without male sperm
 - a) Mary was “with child by the Holy Spirit” (Matt. 1:18, 20)
 - b) Mary was a virgin when the Holy Spirit “came upon” and “overshadowed” her (Luke 1:34-35)
 - 2) Supporting Jesus’ claim that he was both a divine being and a real human
- b. The “seed of woman” (Gen. 3:15)

2. Jesus stood before God as man

- a. The fulfillment of messianic prophecies
 - 1) The circumstances of Jesus’ birth enabled him to fulfill the human elements of Old Testament messianic prophecies
 - a) The seed of woman
 - b) The son of Abraham, son of David
 - 2) Nothing less would suffice for the Son of God to be the Savior of mankind (Heb. 10:1-4)
- b. The ultimate high priest
 - 1) The high priest had to come from among the Jewish people in order to represent the Jewish people before God (Heb. 5:1-3)
 - 2) Thus Jesus came from among the human race so that he could represent the human race before God (Heb. 2:17)
- c. The “brother” of mankind
 - 1) Jesus was not ashamed to associate with sinful man (Heb. 2:11-12)
 - 2) Jesus fulfilled the duty of all mankind (Heb. 2:12-13)

3. Jesus was chosen by God for man

- a. The chosen “firstborn”
 - 1) The “primogenitor” God selected to inherit his name and authority (Heb. 1:2-5)
 - 2) Confirmed at Jesus’ baptism (Matt. 3:17)
- b. The anointed “messiah”
 - 1) Chosen by God as his royal heir (Psa. 2:2, 6-8)
 - 2) Proclaimed to be God’s “Son”
- c. The “son of man”
 - 1) Approaching God’s throne as a man, but given divine authority (Dan. 7:13-14)
 - 2) Acting like deity, but fully representing humanity

The Man of God(6)

“a man accredited by God to you by miracles, wonders and signs”
Acts 2:22

1. Jesus the master teacher

- a. He challenged his listeners with parables and riddles
 - 1) His parables were not easily understood (Matt. 13:10-15, 34-35)
 - 2) His figurative speech was cryptic (John 6:53-60; 16:16-22, 25)
 - 3) His goal: to plant a seed that would later reveal great truths (John 2:19-22; 14:28-29)
- b. He spoke with an authority that captivated his audience
 - 1) He impressed his supporters (Luke 4:31-32) and intimidated his opponents (John 7:45-46)
 - 2) With an air of authority that derived from his divine calling to speak the word of God (Matt. 5:27-28, 31-34; 7:28-29)
- c. He prepared his Apostles to proclaim his gospel
 - 1) Commissioned to speak what was revealed to them (John 14:26; 15:26-27)
 - 2) To speak as if Christ himself was speaking (1 Cor. 7:10, 12)
 - 3) To establish God’s truth for the church (Acts 2:42; 2 Tim. 3:16-17)

2. Jesus the miracle worker

- a. He used his miracles to confirm his claims regarding his identity and mission
 - 1) Being empowered by God implied God’s approval (John 5:36; 10:24-25; Acts 2:22)
 - 2) Thus the foundation of his teaching ministry was his miracles (Mark 2:5-12)
 - 3) He fulfilled his prophetic role of “wonderful counselor” (Isa. 9:6)
- b. He experienced the hardships of a prophet of God
 - 1) He was frustrated by the Jewish rejection of his teaching and miracles (Matt. 12:22-24; 16:13-14; John 11:47-48)
 - 2) But he well understood the limitations of a miracle-working ministry (Matt. 23:34-35; Luke 16:27-31)

3. Jesus the moral example

- a. He committed himself to God’s will in life and ministry
- b. He resisted all temptations and lived a sinless life (2 Cor. 5:21; Heb. 4:15)
- c. He serves as an ideal pattern of proper moral conduct
 - 1) An “incarnate” model of God’s holiness
 - 2) Unique in his messianic mission, but exemplary in his moral conduct and faithfulness (Heb. 12:2-3)

The Lamb of God(7)

“Behold the Lamb of God, who takes away the sin of the world”

John 1:29

1. Our substitute

- a. Sin’s curse
 - 1) God’s nature of justice requires that sin be punished just as he promised
 - a) Sin is a willful violation of God’s authority and makes you “guilty” (Jas. 2:10)
 - b) God’s designated penalty for sin: “death” (Gen. 2:16-17; Rom. 6:23)
 - c) The ultimate death is the suffering of “hell” (Matt. 25:41; 2 Thess. 1:7-9)
 - 2) God’s nature of grace prompts him to seek a way to spare sinners
 - 3) God’s dilemma: how to treat sinners with both justice and grace (Rom. 3:26)
- b. God’s solution: substitutionary atonement
 - 1) Jesus Christ suffered the punishment for our sins in our place
 - a) God treated Christ as if he were a sinner (Isa. 53:4-6, 11; 2 Cor. 5:21)
 - b) So that he can now treat sinners as if they were righteous
 - 2) God’s just nature was satisfied: sin was punished as it ought to be
 - 3) God’s gracious nature was satisfied: he was able to show us mercy and not give us the suffering we deserve
- c. Jesus’ credentials
 - 1) Jesus’ human nature allowed him to substitute for other humans (Heb. 2:14, 17; 10:4)
 - 2) Jesus’ sinless nature allowed his suffering to count for someone else (Heb. 7:26-27)
 - 3) Jesus’ eternal nature allowed his suffering to have infinite application (Heb. 7:23-25)

2. Our sacrifice

- a. The spotless lamb who was killed in our place (John 1:29; Rev. 5:12)
- b. The high priest who presented his own blood to God (Heb. 7:26-27; 9:24-26; 10:10-12)
 - 1) The temple veil was torn open
 - 2) No more sacrifices required (Heb. 10:19-22)

3. Our redeemer

- a. The redeemer who offered to pay whatever price God demanded for us to be set free from being punished
 - 1) Like buying a slave’s freedom
 - 2) Like buying back family property (and persons)
 - 3) Like redeeming your firstborn son’s life from the Death Angel
- b. His death (blood) was the ransom price that was required by God (Matt. 20:28; Eph. 1:7; 1 Pet. 1:18-19)

The Prince of Peace(8)

“His name shall be called . . . the prince of peace”
Isaiah 9:6

1. Our peacemaker

- a. Jesus’ substitutionary atonement on the cross appeased the wrath of God
 - 1) He experienced divine punishment in our place (Isa. 53:4-6, 11)
 - a) The physical torture and pain of a Roman crucifixion
 - b) The emotional shame of being crucified as a criminal (and sinner)
 - c) Amplified immeasurably because he is the Son of God
 - 2) He experienced God’s curse for sin in our place
 - a) His crucifixion symbolized the curse of God (Deut. 21:22-23; Gal. 3:13)
 - b) And made him a scandal and reproach among men (1 Cor. 1:23; Heb. 12:2)
 - 3) He experienced death in our place
 - a) The real “death” at the cross was being separated from his heavenly Father (Matt. 27:46)
 - b) He lost the life that flows from the hand of God (Gen. 3:23-24; Luke 15:32)
 - c) He felt the rejection of God (Psa. 22:1-2, 4-8, 14-19)
 - 4) He experienced hell in our place
 - a) Not a location called “hell,” nor the eternal duration of hell
 - b) But a rejection from the presence of God (Matt. 25:41; 2 Thess. 1:9)
 - c) An intensity of suffering equivalent to God’s penalty of hell
- b. Our atonement was accomplished during the suffering on the cross
 - 1) He cried: “it is finished” (John 19:30)
 - 2) The temple veil was torn at the moment of his death (Matt. 27:50-51)
 - 3) He anticipated being in paradise the day he died (Luke 23:43)
- c. Through Christ’s death we once again have peace with God (Rom. 5:1)

2. Our propitiation

- a. The offering that draws the wrath of God away from us (1 John 2:2; 4:10)
- b. A plan devised by God (Rom. 3:25)

3. Our mediator

- a. The one who reconciles us to God (Rom. 5:8-11; Col. 1:19-22)
 - 1) Jesus listens to both sides of the dispute
 - 2) Jesus determines where fault lies (with us)
 - 3) Jesus establishes the terms for reconciliation
- b. And offers to settle the terms in our behalf (2 Cor. 5:18-20)
 - 1) God has agreed to be reconciled
 - 2) Our evangelistic message: “be reconciled to God”

The Firstborn from the Dead(9)

“Jesus Christ . . . the firstborn from the dead”

Revelation 1:5

1. Jesus’ resurrection is the vindication of our faith

- a. Jesus staked the validity of his claims upon a resurrection on the third day
 - 1) God would raise up the “temple” of his body on the third day (John 2:19-22)
 - 2) God would affirm Jesus with “the sign of Jonah” (Matt. 12:38-40; 27:63)
- b. He rose on “the third day” just as he said (Luke 24:21; 1 Cor. 15:3-4)
- c. His resurrection is the key apologetic support for our faith in Christ
 - 1) That Jesus is the Son of God (Rom. 1:3-4)
 - 2) That Jesus is our substitute atonement (1 Cor. 15:14-20)
- d. The apostolic “witnesses” serve as our link to the resurrection of Jesus
 - 1) Mary Magdalene (Mark 16:9-11; John 20:11-18)
 - 2) The other women from Galilee (Matt. 28:9-10)
 - 3) The 2 men from Emmaus (Mark 16:12-13; Luke 24:13-35)
 - 4) Peter (Luke 24:35)
 - 5) The apostles minus Thomas (Mark 16:14; Luke 24:36-43; John 20:19-25)
 - 6) The apostles with Thomas (John 20:26-31)
 - 7) Seven of the apostles by the Sea of Galilee (John 21:1-25)
 - 8) The apostles in Galilee (Matt. 28:16-20) and 500 disciples (1 Cor. 15:6)
 - 9) Jesus’ brother James (1 Cor. 15:7)
 - 10) The apostles at the ascension (Mark 16:15-20; Luke 24:44-53; Acts 1:9-11)

2. Jesus’ resurrection is the foundation for our hope

- a. Jesus was the first to be resurrected to immortality (Rom. 6:9; Rev. 1:17-18)
- b. Jesus’ resurrection body experienced the first of two stages in heavenly glorification
 - 1) Stage one: resurrection of a dead body back to life
 - 2) Stage two: transformation of a resurrected body to a spiritual condition suited for heaven (1 Cor. 15:42-44, 51-53; Phil. 3:21)
- c. His resurrection is the key determining factor for our Christian hope
 - 1) That we will one day conquer death and live forever in heaven (1 Thess. 4:14)
 - a) He precedes us as the “first fruits” (1 Cor. 15:20-23)
 - b) He precedes us as the “firstborn” (Rev. 1:5)
 - 2) That we have been given a power now to resist sin and become holy
 - a) Having received the resurrection power of the Holy Spirit in our baptism (Acts 2:38-39; Rom. 6:4-6)
 - b) Using it to put to death the sinful deeds of our flesh (Rom. 8:11-13)

The Lord of Life(10)

“Christ died and returned to life
so that he might be the Lord of both the dead and the living”
Romans 14:9

1. The Lion of Judah

- a. Jesus’ resurrection was a victory over the enemies of God’s people
 - 1) He took control of the power of death (Rom. 6:9; 2 Tim. 1:10; Rev. 1:17-18)
 - 2) He revealed a power superior to the Devil and his evil forces (Col. 2:15; Heb. 2:14-15)
 - 3) He struck the Devil with a fatal blow (Gen. 3:15) and sealed his eschatological doom (Rev. 20:10)
- b. Jesus became the ultimate fulfillment of the “lion of Judah” prophecy (Gen. 49:8-10; Rev. 5:5)

2. The risen Lord

- a. Jesus’ resurrection established his authority to rule all of creation
 - 1) In his resurrection appearances he claimed to have been given all power and authority (Matt. 28:18-20)
 - 2) When he ascended from earth he received a royal reception in heaven
 - a) Seated upon God’s throne (Mark 16:19; Heb. 1:3)
 - b) Granted authority over all creation (Eph. 1:20-22; 1 Pet. 3:21-22)
- b. Jesus was given the new title *kurios* or Lord (Acts 2:32-36; Phil. 2:9-11)
- c. The key to our salvation is a commitment to the lordship of Christ
 - 1) Saving faith goes beyond simply believing biblical facts about Jesus, to committing our lives to do anything he tells us to do
 - 2) The “good confession” of the apostolic church: “Jesus is Lord”
 - a) The confession Jesus spoke during his trial before Pilate (1 Tim. 6:12-15 and John 18:37)
 - b) The confession Thomas spoke during Jesus’ resurrection appearances (John 20:28)
 - c) The confession required in the apostolic preaching of the gospel (Rom. 10:9)
 - d) The confession that distinguishes true Christians in times of persecution (1 Cor. 12:3; 1 Pet. 3:15)
 - e) The confession commemorated each week on “the Lord’s day” (Rev. 1:10)

3. The King of Kings

- a. Jesus’ resurrection established his authority to return as Judge of creation (Acts 17:31)
- b. Jesus will return to earth as “King of kings and Lord of lords” (Rev. 19:11-16)
- c. Every knee will bow before Jesus and every tongue will confess that Jesus is Lord (Psa. 110:1-3; Isa. 45:23)