



The mind of the prudent acquires knowledge, and the ear of the wise seeks knowledge. *Proverbs 18:15*

## 2c. Is Jesus God?

### Also asked as:

Did Jesus ever claim to be God?

Does the Bible state that Jesus was God?

Wasn't Jesus just a good man?

Wasn't Jesus just a good moral teacher?

Wasn't Jesus just another deranged religious leader?

Is the story of Jesus true?

**General question:** Is the message of Christianity true?

### Similar questions answered separately on eSeeker:

Is the Bible reliable?

What about the hypocrites?

Does God exist?

Did the Resurrection of Jesus really happen?

**A caution:** This question is intricately connected to the questions about the reliability of the Bible, the existence of God, and the Resurrection of Jesus. Often, more than one of these must be answered to satisfy a questioner. However, sometimes one of these questions is asked as an isolated question ... not requiring the answering of any of the others.

### The short answer:

This is a very important question because Jesus claimed to be God, truth, and the only source of eternal life. The only Jesus worth considering is the Jesus of the Bible. A Jesus presumptuously redefined by man is not Jesus. The Bible states clearly that Jesus is God ... in the Old and New Testaments, by the testimony of the Apostles, and in the words and actions of Jesus Himself. The Jesus of the Bible is both God and Savior. However, He does not universally give eternal life to everyone. Each person, including you and me, must personally believe in Him to have eternal life.

## The longer answer:

**The importance of the question.** Christianity is different from other religions. Most religions involve some men, whom they call prophets, attempting to tell us about God. They are men telling other men about God. Existence can be described as having two levels ... as in a building with a lower first story (level or floor) and a second story (level or floor). The lower level is that of our human existence. The upper level is that of God ... not that of human spirituality but rather that of God's being. Other religions are men on the first level attempting to find, define, and appease some god or gods on the second level. Christianity is the opposite of that. Christianity is based on God becoming a man ... the God of the second level coming to mankind on the first level in the person of the God-man Jesus Christ. The infinite, eternal, all-knowing, all-powerful, all-present God became a man ... added humanity to His deity so that humanity could know His deity. Jesus and the authors of the Bible stated clearly that Jesus is that One who invaded our human existence. He, God Himself, came to us *"to seek and to save that which was lost,"* Luke 19:10. The validity of this truth is of eternal importance to each of us.

**Which Jesus is worthy of our consideration?** There are four to consider.

**The first Jesus** is the one that His critics have constructed over the centuries. They have redefined the Jesus of the Bible into a humanity-only entity. That Jesus is not the real one. That Jesus is not worthy of consideration.

**The second Jesus** is the diluted one re-created by some of His so-called followers. They have looked at the Jesus of the Bible as some people might look at a restaurant menu. They choose from the menu what pleases them while rejecting the rest. The result is a diluted Jesus who is not worthy of consideration.

**The third Jesus** might be the one that you have constructed in your mind and heart. It may not be that you have rejected the Jesus of the Bible. Maybe you have just not taken a serious look at the Bible to find the real Jesus. If you have constructed your own Jesus, then you are trusting in yourself as the final authority. In a way, you have created your own religion. Such a Jesus is not the real Jesus.

**The fourth Jesus** is the historic one revealed in the Bible. He is the only real Jesus. Did that Jesus claim and prove to be the God who came to earth in the form of the God-man? Is that Jesus truly God? Your response to those questions is of eternal importance. A Jesus created by man is not worthy of our consideration. A real Jesus who came to earth from Heaven is worthy of our consideration. No one has the right or authority to redefine or recreate Jesus. The only worthy Jesus is the one defined in the Bible.

**Does truth matter?** Yes, truth matters. It matters in all aspects of life ... especially in life and death issues ... and very especially in eternal issues. The truthfulness of the words of Jesus is very important. Some people say that Jesus was not God and that He was just a man who was a good moral teacher. However His words say something different. Jesus said, *"I am the way, and the truth, and the life; no one comes to the Father but through Me,"* John 14:6. That is a bold statement. Jesus said that He was truth. If He lied about being the one way to God, then He was not truth. He also claimed to be the source of life. He actually claimed to be God ... claiming to be God directly in His words and indirectly through His actions. The truth of such claims is of eternal consequence to each of us. Those words are either true and He was God or He wasn't even a good moral teacher. If He was not God, then He was a liar or a megalomaniac. If He is God, then we need to come to God through Him.

**Did Jesus claim to be God?** Jesus made direct statements that He was God. He also did things that are exclusively God-things that were indirect but obvious claims to His being deity. Jesus also confirmed His indirect claims to deity in some dramatic demonstrations of His power.

### **His direct claims.**

**Jesus claimed equality with God.** *"I and the Father are one,"* John 10:30.

**Jesus claimed to be the visible representation of God.** Jesus said, *"He who sees Me sees the One who sent Me,"* John 12:45. *"Philip said to Him, 'Lord, show us the Father, and it is enough for us.' Jesus said to him, 'Have I been so long with you, and yet you have not come to know Me, Philip? He who has seen Me has seen the Father,'"* John 14:8-9.

**Jesus claimed to be the "I AM".** There is a remarkable name for God in the Bible ... that name is *I AM*. It originated at the time when God spoke to Moses at the burning bush ... telling him to lead His people out of Egyptian bondage. God said to Moses, *"I am the God of your father, the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob." Then Moses hid his face, for he was afraid to look at God,* Exodus 3:6. Moses asked God, *"Behold, I am going to the sons of Israel, and I will say to them, 'The God of your fathers has sent me to you.' Now they may say to me 'What is His name?' What shall I say to them?"* Exodus 3:13. God responded forcefully to Moses, *"I AM WHO I AM"; and He said, 'Thus you shall say to the sons of Israel, "I AM has sent me to you.'" God, furthermore, said to Moses, 'Thus you shall say to the sons of Israel, "The Lord, the God of your fathers, the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob, has sent me to you. This is My name forever, and this is My memorial-name to all generations,"* Exodus 3:14-15. Jesus boldly identified Himself as the "*I AM*" ... a direct claim to His being God. Jesus said, *"You will die in your sins; for unless you believe that I AM, you will die in your sins,"* John 8:24. He also said, *"When you lift up the Son of Man, then you will know that I AM,"* John 8:28. Jesus also said, *"Truly, truly, I say to you, before Abraham was born, I AM,"* John 8:58. All of these are direct claims by Jesus to His being God. Jesus claiming to be the "*I AM*" is His claim, "I am GOD".

### **His indirect claims.**

**Jesus claimed to have the authority to forgive sins.** *"And they came, bringing to Him a paralytic, carried by four men. Being unable to get to Him because of the crowd, they removed the roof above Him; and when they had dug an opening, they let down the pallet on which the paralytic was lying. And Jesus seeing their faith said to the paralytic, 'Son, your sins are forgiven.' But some of the scribes were sitting there and reasoning in their hearts, 'Why does this man speak that way? He is blaspheming; who can forgive sins but God alone?' Immediately Jesus, aware in His spirit that they were reasoning that way within themselves, said to them, 'Why are you reasoning about these things in your hearts? Which is easier, to say to the paralytic, "Your sins are forgiven"; or to say, "Get up, and pick up your pallet and walk"? But so that you may know that the Son of Man has authority on earth to forgive sins' He said to the paralytic, 'I say to you, get up, pick up your pallet and go home.' And he got up and immediately picked up the pallet and went out in the sight of everyone, so that they were all amazed and were glorifying God, saying, 'We have never seen anything like this,'"* Mark 2:3-12.

**Jesus claimed to have the authority to give eternal life.** *"Jesus said to them, 'I am the bread of life; he who comes to Me will not hunger, and he who believes in Me will never thirst. But I said to you that you have seen Me, and yet do not believe. All that the Father gives Me will come to Me, and the one who comes to Me I will certainly not cast out. For I have come down from heaven, not to do My own will, but the will of Him who sent Me. This is the will of Him who sent Me, that of all that He has given Me I lose nothing, but raise it up on the last day. For this is the will of My Father, that everyone who beholds the Son and believes in Him will have eternal life, and I Myself will raise him up on the last day,'" John 6:35-40. Jesus also said, "I am the resurrection and the life; he who believes in Me will live even if he dies, and everyone who lives and believes in Me will never die. Do you believe this?" John 11:25-26. And He said, "My sheep hear My voice, and I know them, and they follow Me; and I give eternal life to them, and they will never perish; and no one will snatch them out of My hand," John 10:27-28.*

**Jesus claimed to have the authority to judge man.** *"As the Father raises the dead and gives them life, even so the Son also gives life to whom He wishes. For not even the Father judges anyone, but He has given all judgment to the Son, so that all will honor the Son even as they honor the Father. He who does not honor the Son does not honor the Father who sent Him. Truly, truly, I say to you, he who hears My word, and believes Him who sent Me, has eternal life, and does not come into judgment, but has passed out of death into life. Truly, truly, I say to you, an hour is coming and now is, when the dead will hear the voice of the Son of God, and those who hear will live. For just as the Father has life in Himself, even so He gave to the Son also to have life in Himself; and He gave Him authority to execute judgment, because He is the Son of Man," John 5:21-27.*

### **His dramatized claims.**

**The bread of life.** Jesus said that He was the bread of life that had come down out of Heaven, John 6:32-35. Immediately prior to that statement, Jesus had miraculously fed bread to a multitude of over 5,000, John 6:1-14.

**The light of the world.** Jesus said that He was the light of the world, John 9:5. Then He dramatically illustrated that claim with a miracle ... He healed a man who had been blind from birth, John 9:1-7.

**The resurrection and the life.** Jesus made the claim that He had the power over life and death, John 11:25-26. Then He dramatically confirmed that claim by raising His friend Lazarus from the dead, John 11:38-44.

### **The testimony of New Testament authors.**

**The Apostle John's testimony.** Speaking of Jesus, John wrote, *"In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. He was in the beginning with God. All things came into being through Him, and apart from Him nothing came into being that has come into being. In Him was life, and the life was the Light of men. The Light shines in the darkness, and the darkness did not comprehend it ... But as many as received Him, to them He gave the right to become children of God, even to those who believe in His name, who were born, not of blood nor of the will of the flesh nor of the will of man, but of God. And the Word became flesh, and dwelt among us, and we saw His glory, glory as of the only begotten from the Father, full of grace and truth," John 1:1-14.*

**The Apostle Peter's testimony.** *"Simon Peter, a bond-servant and apostle of Jesus Christ, to those who have received a faith of the same kind as ours, by the righteousness*

of our God and Savior, Jesus Christ," 2 Peter 1:1. The structure and grammar of the original Greek of this verse is definitive in both the words *God* and *Savior* applying to *Jesus*. It is not *God plus the Savior Jesus* ... it is the *God Jesus, the Savior Jesus*.

**The Apostle Paul's testimony.** *"For the grace of God has appeared, bringing salvation to all men, instructing us to deny ungodliness and worldly desires and to live sensibly, righteously and godly in the present age, looking for the blessed hope and the appearing of the glory of our great God and Savior, Christ Jesus, who gave Himself for us to redeem us from every lawless deed, and to purify for Himself a people for His own possession, zealous for good deeds," Titus 2:11-14.*

**The author of Hebrews' testimony.** The author of Hebrews applied Psalm 45:6-7 to Jesus ... giving God the Father's testimony about God the Son. *"But of the Son He says, 'Your throne, O God, is forever and ever, and the righteous scepter is the scepter of His kingdom. You have loved righteousness and hated lawlessness; therefore God, your God, has anointed You with the oil of gladness above Your companions,'" Hebrew 1:8-9.* In these verses, it is God the Father referring to Jesus as God.

### **The testimony of the enemies of Jesus.**

*"And the high priest said to Him, 'I adjure You by the living God, that You tell us whether You are the Christ, the Son of God.' Jesus said to him, 'You have said it yourself; nevertheless I tell you, hereafter you will see the Son of Man sitting at the right hand of power, and coming on the clouds of heaven.' Then the high priest tore his robes and said, 'He has blasphemed! What further need do we have of witnesses? Behold, you have now heard the blasphemy; what do you think?' They answered, 'He deserves death!'" Matthew 26:63-66.* In their eyes, His blasphemy was His claiming to be God by these statements. However, since He was God, He was not blaspheming by identifying Himself as the God whom He truly was.

*"And Jesus ... said to the paralytic, 'Son, your sins are forgiven.' But some of the scribes were sitting there and reasoning in their hearts, 'Why does this man speak that way? He is blaspheming; who can forgive sins but God alone?'" Mark 2:5-7.*

*"The man went away, and told the Jews that it was Jesus who had made him well. For this reason the Jews were persecuting Jesus, because He was doing these things on the Sabbath. But He answered them, 'My Father is working until now, and I Myself am working.' For this reason therefore the Jews were seeking all the more to kill Him, because He not only was breaking the Sabbath, but also was calling God His own Father, making Himself equal with God," John 5:15-18.*

*"So when the chief priests and the officers saw Him, they cried out saying, 'Crucify, crucify!' Pilate said to them, 'Take Him yourselves and crucify Him, for I find no guilt in Him.' The Jews answered him, 'We have a law, and by that law He ought to die because He made Himself out to be the Son of God,'" John 19:6-7.*

The Roman Centurion who executed Jesus gave his testimony standing at the foot of the cross, *"He began praising God, saying, 'certainly this man was innocent ... truly this was the Son of God!'" Luke 23:47 and Mark 15:39.*

### **More evidence.**

**Jesus is identified as the Creator of the world** in both the Old and New Testaments in passages such as Isaiah 48:12-17, John 1:3, Colossians 1:16, and Hebrews 1:10.

**The names of Jesus** identify Him as God. He was called Alpha and Omega, Immanuel (meaning God with us), Lord, King, Redeemer, Savior, Shepherd, and Son of God.

**The attributes of Jesus described** in the Bible are those of God ... eternity, immutability, omnipotence, omnipresence, omniscience, and sinlessness.

**Jesus accepted worship** openly and publicly. The Bible makes it clear that worship is to be directed only to God.

**Jesus spoke with the authority of God** in both how He spoke and in what He said. That authority was often proven by the miraculous consequences of His words.

**Jesus conquered death** as seen in the miracles in which He raised the dead ... and most importantly in His own resurrection from the dead.

**Jesus had power over Satan and demonic forces** as seen in His own forceful confrontations with them and in His exorcisms and healings.

**The character of Jesus** was overwhelmingly sound, good, righteous, and just. The way He lived and died was consistent with Him being God ... entirely opposite to His being a liar, a lunatic, or a megalomaniac.

### **The testimony of changed lives.**

**Throughout the history of Christianity** men, women, and children have found peace, joy, hope, forgiveness, and purpose through Jesus Christ. He changed their lives and gave them stability in good times and in bad times. Many were also persecuted and executed for their faith.

**First century** believers were severely persecuted and martyred for their faith. All of the original Apostles (except John) were martyred for their belief in Jesus being God and in His being their Savior. Scores of first century believers were executed for their faith. Their belief in the absolute truth of Jesus was so overwhelming that they would not accept relief, release, or reversal of death-sentences if conditioned on their denying their Savior and God Jesus. The Apostle John died in old age having been exiled to the desolate island of Patmos because of his faith in Jesus.

**Subsequent centuries of believers** have lived changed lives and died with confident hope. Many have been persecuted and martyred because of their belief in the literal, historic, God-man Jesus. Moreover, more Christians were martyred for their faith in the 20<sup>th</sup> century than in all previous centuries combined.

**Christians of today** are from every walk of life ... not limited by race, color, ethnic group, age, education, or economic status. The poorest and the richest believe in Jesus. The healthiest and the sickest believe in Him. The weakest and the most powerful believe in Him. When religious leaders relentlessly questioned a man that Jesus had healed, the man responded, *"One thing I do know, that though I was blind, now I see,"* John 9:25. Believers from every century have given similar testimony. In one form or another, they have said for centuries, *"One thing I do know ... He changed my life."*

**Truth applied.** Jesus said, *"I am the way, and the truth, and the life; no one comes to the Father but through Me,"* John 14:6. That truth means nothing to an individual, to you or to me, unless it is truth applied. The way to apply that truth, the way to God through Jesus, is by believing in Jesus. *"For God so loved the world, that He gave His only begotten Son, that whoever believes in Him*

*shall not perish, but have eternal life ... He who believes in Him is not judged; he who does not believe has been judged already, because he has not believed in the name of the only begotten Son of God," John 3:16 & 18.*

**The big question.** Jesus spoke with the sister of Lazarus four days after her brother had died. She did not know that Jesus would very shortly raise Lazarus from the dead ... a miracle that authenticated His words to her. *"Martha then said to Jesus, 'Lord, if You had been here, my brother would not have died. Even now I know that whatever You ask of God, God will give You.' Jesus said to her, 'Your brother will rise again.' Martha said to Him, 'I know that he will rise again in the resurrection on the last day.' Jesus said to her, 'I am the resurrection and the life; he who believes in Me will live even if he dies, and everyone who lives and believes in Me will never die. Do you believe this?'"* John 11:21-26. The big question for her is the same big question for you and for me. As Jesus said, "Do you believe this?" If you have any doubt about having truly believed in Him, please visit [www.911God.org](http://www.911God.org) to be sure that your eternity is in order.

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