



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

2d. How is Jesus falsely redefined?

An introduction

Liberal Christianity, pseudo-Christian organizations, cults, and other world religions redefine, disregard, and dishonor Jesus. They ignore the Bible, dilute the Bible, disparage the Bible, or claim to supersede the Bible in recreating a Jesus who is much less than the real Jesus. This answer explains some of those false redefinitions contradicting the real Jesus portrayed in the Bible. It is important to be able to recognize the real Jesus and to identify the forgeries. The existence of forgeries and forgers does not negate the real Jesus. It is very important to recognize that the Jesus of pseudo-Christian organizations is not the true Jesus of the Bible. Those organizations are not truly Christian.

Common tactics in redefining Jesus

The groups mentioned above redefine Jesus. However, the only true Jesus is the one described in detail in the Bible. Answer 2c will help you see the real, historic Jesus of the Bible. Those who redefine Jesus into something less than the true Jesus follow common tactics.

1. They give more authority to their writings than to the Bible.
2. They give more authority to their founders or current leaders than to the Bible.
3. They claim to have discovered exclusive truth that expands or redefines the Bible.
4. They add to, or take away from, the text of the Bible.
5. They take passages out of the full context of the Bible to create a humanity-only Jesus.
6. They call Jesus a *god* or *son of god* using non-Biblical definitions of those terms.
7. They classify Jesus as just one in a sequence, or chain, of prophets.
8. They declare their prophet to be the final and authoritative link in the prophet chain.
9. They define Jesus as non-eternal ... being created.
10. They state that Jesus became the Christ at some point in his adult earthly life.

Note: The format of this eSeeker answer is different than many of the other ones because of the different type of information given. This answer deals specifically with the way that individuals, types of people, religious organizations, and other religions try to redefine Jesus into someone or something different than the Jesus of the Bible. No short answer is given.

The longer answer:

Misusing the Bible.

Certain passages are commonly misused to portray a Jesus who is less than the Father. They say He is not God or that He is a lesser god than the Father is. However, the historic Jesus of the Bible is fully God and equal to the Father. Consider how the following passages are misused.

The Father is greater than Jesus, John 14:28. *"You heard that I said to you, 'I go away, and I will come to you.' If you loved Me, you would have rejoiced because I go to the Father, for the Father is greater than I."* Those who redefine Jesus say that He, lesser in being than the Father, is not fully God. However, earlier in this passage Jesus said, *"He who has seen Me has seen the Father,"* John 14:9. His enemies understood His claim of equality with the Father. *"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 5:18. Jesus was referring to His rank rather than to His being in John 14:28. The Bible teaches that Jesus, in taking the form of a man, voluntarily subjugated Himself in rank and position to the Father. He was not less in being. When you stop at a police officer's order, you stop because of his greater rank and position in the law ... not because he is superior in being. Equality and inequality are independent from, and not determined by, rank or position.

The Father is the head of Christ, 1 Corinthians 11:3. *"But I want you to understand that Christ is the head of every man, and the man is the head of a woman, and God is the head of Christ."* The re-definers use this verse as they do the one above, John 14:28, to say that Jesus is less than the Father is. However, when Jesus added humanity to His undiminished deity, He put himself under the headship of God the Father. One's headship, (i.e., authority) over another does not mean superiority in being.

Jesus was subject to the Father, 1 Corinthians 15:28. *"When all things are subjected to Him, then the Son Himself also will be subjected to the One who subjected all things to Him, so that God may be all in all."* A position of authority, as in the Father's authority over the Son, does not make one greater or less than the other. One's being rather than position determines superiority. Both the Father and Jesus are equal in being.

Jesus was the "only begotten" son of the Father, John 3:16-18. *"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."* The re-definers use this passage and other similar ones to say that Jesus was born of, or created by, God ... and therefore less than God. But, that is not what the text means. One Greek word, "monogenes", is translated into the two English words in this text as "only begotten". However, "monogenes" means *only, unique, or one-and-only*. It does not mean *begotten, born, or created*. If a man has only one daughter, it could be said that she is his *monogenes* daughter ... his *one-and-only* daughter as in Luke 8:42 (or used of a one-and-only son as in Luke 7:12 and 9:38).

Jesus was "begotten" by the Father, Hebrews 5:5. *"So also Christ did not glorify Himself so as to become a high priest, but He who said to Him, 'You are My Son, today I have begotten You.'"* This verse is seldom used by re-definers ... maybe because it is a little less known. This verse uses an actual Greek word *gennaō* translated into English as *begotten*. The author of Hebrews is quoting Psalm 2:7 in this verse ... and alludes to it in Hebrews 1:5. Paul used the same Greek word to describe his own involvement in the conversion of the runaway slave Onesimus to Christianity. *"I appeal to you for my child Onesimus, whom I have begotten in my imprisonment,"* Philemon 1:10. Paul neither gave

birth to nor did he create Onesimus. Paul was there when Onesimus believed in Jesus. On that day, the already existent Onesimus became the born-again Onesimus. Jesus always existed, Micah 5:2, Isaiah 9:6, and John 1:1-2&14. He always existed as fully God ... but also is the Son. The Apostle Paul's commentary tells us that the day that Jesus was "begotten" was actually the day He rose from the dead, Acts 13:32-33. The "today" prophesied in Psalm 2:7 was that first Easter Sunday morning when Jesus rose

Jesus was the first-born, Colossians 1:15. *"He is the image of the invisible God, the firstborn of all creation."* The re-definers use this verse to claim that Jesus was created. In some verses where it is stated in some way that Jesus created all things, they insert the word *other* (not in the original texts) into the statements to falsely claim that Jesus created all *other* things ... implying that Jesus was also created. The *firstborn of creation* is used once in the Bible. The Greek word *prototokos* is translated as *firstborn*. In a Jewish family, during the times of the Old and New Testaments, *firstborn* was a position of authority in the family given automatically to the eldest male child. However, it did not mean *born first*. If a family had three daughters and then three sons, the firstborn was actually born fourth. Jesus was not created. Jesus had firstborn position in creation ... the position of authority over it. *"For by Him all things were created, both in the heavens and on earth, visible and invisible, whether thrones or dominions or rulers or authorities – all things have been created through Him and for Him. He is before all things, and in Him all things hold together,"* Colossians 1:16-17. He was the Creator and has authority over His creation. Old Testament examples of *firstborn* are in Genesis and in 1 Chronicles 5:1-2. Reuben was born first into Jacob's family ... and as such was in the position of authority of *firstborn*. However, he sinned against his father who subsequently gave Reuben's birthright as the firstborn to his brother Joseph. In Jacob's family, Joseph became the firstborn although he was born eleventh. Firstborn of creation is a position of authority in creation ... held by the eternal and uncreated Jesus.

Other men are called gods, John 10:34-36. *"Jesus answered them, has it not been written in your Law, 'I said, you are gods'? If he called them gods, to whom the word of God came (and the Scripture cannot be broken), do you say of Him, whom the Father sanctified and sent into the world, 'You are blaspheming,' because I said, 'I am the Son of God'?"* The re-definers claim that Jesus was really saying that we are all equal ... in a sense we are all gods. That is not what Jesus was saying. He was challenging His critics to think through what was being said. The Old Testament uses many names for God. One is the Hebrew word *elohiym* ... always used of God in the plural designating the Trinity. Interestingly it is used with singular verbs indicating that the One triune God acts. However, the word *elohiym* is also used of human judges in the Old Testament who were to represent God, Exodus 22:8-9 (translated as *judges*) and Psalm 82:6 (translated as *gods*). The words of Jesus in John 10:34-36 forced His critics to decide if He was simply calling Himself a representative of God or actually calling Himself God. His critics understood. They knew that He was calling Himself God, John 5:15-18 and 19:6-7.

Jesus was just a man, 1 Timothy 2:5 and Romans 5:15. *"For there is one God, and one mediator also between God and men, the man Christ Jesus,"* and *"But the free gift is not like the transgression. For if by the transgression of the one the many died, much more did the grace of God and the gift by the grace of the one Man Jesus Christ, abound to the many."* The re-definers claim that these verses, and even those where Jesus calls Himself the Son of Man, show that Jesus was just a man ... that He was void of deity. The Bible does proclaim that Jesus was a man. However, it *never* states that He was *just* a man. Jesus was God *and* also man. *"Christ Jesus, who, although He existed in the form of God, did not regard equality with God a thing to be grasped, but emptied Himself, taking the form of a bond-servant, and being made in the likeness of men. Being found in appearance as a man, He humbled Himself by becoming obedient to the point of death, even death on a cross,"* Philippians 2:5-8. Jesus was fully God and fully man.

Jesus was not all-powerful, John 5:19 & 30 and 14:10. *"Therefore Jesus answered and was saying to them, 'Truly, truly, I say to you, the Son can do nothing of Himself, unless it is something He sees the Father doing; for whatever the Father does, these things the Son also does in like manner,'" & "I can do nothing on My own initiative. As I hear, I judge; and My judgment is just, because I do not seek My own will, but the will of Him who sent Me," and "Do you not believe that I am in the Father, and the Father is in Me? The words that I say to you I do not speak on My own initiative, but the Father abiding in Me does His works."* The re-definers claim that these statements indicate that Jesus was not all-powerful and therefore not all God. However, these statements only indicate that Jesus subjugated Himself to the Father during His time on earth. Such subjugation, as explained earlier, has nothing to do with equality of *being*.

Jesus was not all-knowing, Mark 13:32. *"But of that day or hour no one knows, not even the angels in heaven, nor the Son, but the Father."* The re-definers claim that this was a statement by Jesus indicating that He lacked the God attribute of omniscience. We cannot understand the combination of infinite deity and finite humanity. Jesus, as a man, grew in stature and wisdom, Luke 2:52. He grew weary and slept. He became hungry and ate. However, He was also fully God at the same time. We cannot understand that in our finite thinking. Did Jesus, in His humanity, set aside His knowledge of the date and time of His return? That is possible. Or is the word translated as "*knows*" mean *focus on* or *make known* as it does in its usage by Paul in 1 Corinthians 2:2? That would mean that the date and time of His return were not His current concern ... or that it was the Father's prerogative to make that known. Some people believe that Mark 13:32 was an addition to the original text because its counterpart is not found in the other Gospels.

Only God is good, Mark 10:17-18. *"As He was setting out on a journey, a man ran up to Him and knelt before Him, and asked Him, 'Good Teacher, what shall I do to inherit eternal life?' And Jesus said to him, 'Why do you call Me good? No one is good except God alone'."* The re-definers claim that Jesus was here declaring that He was not all-good and therefore was not God. However, that is not what Jesus was saying. He was simply asking the man a thought-provoking question. Paraphrased, *if you are calling me good, are you calling me God?* If He was truly good, then He was truly God. If He was truly God, then He was truly good. The Bible emphatically states that Jesus was God ... holy, righteous, and sinless, Acts 3:14, Hebrews 7:26-27, and 1 Peter 2:21-24.

How others try to redefine Jesus and God.

Atheist. In the formal sense, an atheist is one who believes that the evidence is sufficient to prove and know that there is no supreme being. However, in common usage, it simply refers to someone who denies that there is a God. Atheism denies that Jesus is God.

Agnostic. An agnostic, in the formal sense, is one who believes that the evidence is sufficient to prove and know that the existence of a supreme being is unknown and unknowable. However, in common usage, it simply refers to someone who doubts, or is not sure, that there is a God. Agnosticism doubts, or is unsure, that Jesus is God.

Buddhist. To a Buddhist, Jesus was just a moral teacher of much less importance than Buddha. Buddhism denies the absolute personal deity of Jesus.

Christian Scientist. To them, Jesus is the Son of God ... but not actually God. They redefine Jesus into to a diluted one that is contrary to the teaching of the Bible. Christian Science claims that Jesus is the human man and that Christ is the divine idea that heals. It is neither Christian nor Science.

Confucius. In most ways, Confucianism is more humanistic and philosophical than religious. It rejects the idea of a personal God.

Hindu. A basic belief of Hinduism sees Brahma as the impersonal all-encompassing soul of the world manifested in a vast multitude of gods. It is pantheistic in seeing all things as part of Brahma. To them, Jesus was no more than a special manifestation of Brahma.

Jew. Most of the early Church and authors of the New Testament were Jewish. Jesus was Jewish. His human lineage is traceable back to Abraham. Traditional Judaism looks upon Christianity as a heretical sect. They deny the deity and messiahship of Jesus.

Jehovah Witness. They state that Jesus is not One God with the Father. Jesus is not eternal. He was created by God ... the first son brought forth by Jehovah. Michael the Archangel and Jesus are the same being. Jesus became the Messiah (the Christ) at His baptism. The resurrection of Jesus was spiritual but not physical. They should examine Matthew 28:9 and Luke 24:39-43. They believe that Jesus accomplished partial atonement for man in paying for original sin. Man is on his own to complete the payment for his own sins by good works ... Jehovah Witness good works.

Mormon. The Mormon Church and the Church of Latter Day Saints (LDS) are two of the divisions of the religion begun by Joseph Smith. Mormons believe that a council of gods decided that one of them (Adam) would become a man and be the god of this earth. Adam came to earth with one of his celestial wives, Eve. All people, including Jesus who was the brother of Lucifer, are pre-existent before being born in flesh. They must become flesh to evolve into gods. Jesus is the natural offspring of Adam and Mary. Jesus was a polygamist in that He married two Marys and Martha ... and had children. Jesus has some pre-eminence because of His longevity rather than because of His nature.

Muslim. Muslims are followers of Islam. Allah is their god. Allah is *not* another name for the God of the Bible. To Muslims, Jesus was just a prophet ... a link in the prophet chain that includes Adam, Noah, Abraham, Moses, Jesus, and the ultimate and greatest prophet Muhammad who founded Islam. Muslims reject most of the New Testament account of the life of Jesus. They believe that Judas rather than Jesus was crucified. Jesus said, *"He who does not honor the Son does not honor the Father who sent Him,"* John 5:23. Islam does not honor Jesus. Therefore, they do not honor the one true God of the Bible. Christians and Muslims do not worship the same God.

Unitarian. They deny His deity and His equality with God.

Note: More detail on these beliefs and religions is given in other sections of eSeeker.

Conclusion.

A redefined Jesus is not the historic Jesus of the Bible. The real Jesus is the one described in the Bible ... the eternal, infinite God who became man so that we could know Him. Deity became humanity so that humanity could know true deity. Do not be deceived by forgeries or forgers. The Jesus of the Bible is the one-and-only true Jesus.

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