

Video Transcript: Was Jesus Christ God?

1.

The central message that Jesus gave the world was one of peace with God and salvation through faith. But it was not for this that he was put to death by the religious leaders of his day. The single greatest difficulty with Jesus Christ is his claim to be the Son of God. To many religious people this claim is blasphemous, and to others it is inconceivable.

But what if it is true? What if Jesus Christ was God in the form of a man? Surely this is a question at least worthy of investigation.

2.

Jesus Christ was undoubtedly a remarkable man.

His religious teachings have had a profound effect on world history. His influence on the world is all the more remarkable given his humble beginnings.

Jesus of Nazareth, without money and arms, conquered more millions than Alexander, Caesar, Mohammed and Napoleon; without science and learning, he shed more light on things human and divine, than all the philosophers and scholars combined; without the eloquence of the school, he spoke words of life such as were never spoken before, nor since, and produced effects which lie beyond the reach of orator or poet; ...

3.

without writing a single line, he has set more pens in motion and furnished themes for more sermons, orations, discussions, works of art, learned volumes, and sweet songs of praise than the whole army of great men of ancient and modern times. Born in a manger and crucified as a malefactor, he now controls the destinies of the civilised world, and rules a spiritual empire which embraces one-third of the inhabitants of the globe – Philip Schaff.

If ever there was a man whose life and teachings are worthy of investigation, it is this man Jesus Christ, who called himself the Son of God.

4.

Even those opposed to his teachings recognised his unique qualities.

If ever God was man or man was God, Jesus Christ was both – Lord Byron.

If the life and death of Socrates are those of a philosopher, the life and death of Jesus Christ are those of a God – Rousseau.

I know men, and I tell you, Christ was not a man. Everything about Christ astonishes me. His spirit overwhelms and confounds me. There is no comparison between him and any other being. He stands single and alone – Napoleon.

If ever the Divine appeared on earth, it was in the person of Christ – Goethe.

5.

Many people, including his opponents, have admired the teachings of Jesus for their wisdom and insight into life and God.

But what stands out most about him, and sets him apart from all other religious leaders, are the astonishing claims that he made about himself.

Jesus claimed:

- To exist before he was born (John 8:58; 17:5).
- To come from Heaven (e.g., John 6:33, 35; 8:23; 3:13).
- To be the Son of God (e.g., Matthew 16:15-17; Mark 14:61-62; Luke 22:70; John 10:36).

6.

- To have the authority of God (e.g., Matthew 28:18; John 5:24-30; 11:25-26; 14:13).

- To be sinless (John 8:29; 8:46; 14:30-31).
- To be the truth (e.g., John 7:16; 14:6; 18:37).
- To be the fulfilment of prophecy (e.g., Matthew 5:17; Luke 4:17-21; 24:25-27; John 5:39-40, 46).
- To give eternal life (e.g., John 3:14-16; 6:40; 11:25-26; 14:6).
- To forgive sin (Matthew 9:1-8; Luke 7:48-49; cf. John 8:24).

7.

And to be the same as God (e.g., John 6:35; 8:12; 10:9; 10:14; 11:25-26; 14:6; 15:1, 5).

So close was his connection with God that he equated a man's attitude to himself with the man's attitude to God. Thus, to know Jesus was to know God (John 8:19; 14:7). To see him was to see God (John 12:45; 14:9). To believe in him was to believe in God (John 12:44). To receive him was to receive God (Mark 9:37). To hate him was to hate God (John 15:23). And to honour him was to honour God (John 5:23) – John Stott.

8.

Faced with the astonishing claims that Christ made about himself leaves us with only four possible conclusions:

1. Jesus claimed to be God, but was not – in which case, he was a **liar**.
2. Jesus thought that he was God, but was not – in which case, he was a **lunatic**.
3. Jesus never claimed to be God, but his followers created the idea – in which case, he was a **legend**.
4. Jesus claimed to be God because he was God – in which case, he is **Lord**.

9.

A serious reflection on the character and teachings of Christ will rule out the first two positions. The Christ of the gospels does not fit the position of a liar or a lunatic.

His teachings give no indication of fraud or insanity. Instead, they show insight and wisdom as yet unsurpassed by any other religious founder, moralist, or philosopher.

Also, it is highly improbable that Jesus was invented by his disciples, many of whom were uneducated and simple people. The writings of the New Testament making up the historical account of the life and teachings of Jesus come across as completely authentic. There is no evidence of deception or inconsistency in the writings, or of egotism or self-interest on the part of the writers.

Instead, the gospels present a genuine devotion to a central theme: that Jesus Christ is the Saviour.

To this end, his disciples were prepared to suffer and to lay down their lives.

The only reasonable conclusion to draw is that the claims of Christ are genuine and true.

10.

There is other evidence as well, which can be briefly summarised as follows:

His character supports his claims. His life was consistent with, and exemplified, his own teaching.

His teaching supports his claims. There is a wisdom and comprehensiveness about the ethical teaching of Christ that has never been surpassed.

His miracles support his claims. Jesus himself claimed that his works were evidence that the Father had sent him (John 5:36; 10:37-38; 14:11).

Bible prophecy supports his claims. Exceedingly strong evidence in support of the claims that Christ made about himself can be found in the scores of Old Testament prophecies precisely fulfilled by him during his lifetime.

The resurrection proves his claims. As discussed in another video in this series, there is strong evidence to support Christ's resurrection from the dead. This is the critical piece of evidence that clinches the deal, and proves beyond doubt that Christ was who he claimed to be. As one Bible commentator put it:

Jesus' supreme credential to authenticate his claim to deity was his resurrection from the dead. Five times in the course of his life he predicted he would die. He also predicted how he would die and that three days later he would rise from the dead and appear to his disciples – Paul E. Little.

11.

Jesus Christ is unique among religious founders. While they stressed the importance of their teachings, Christ focused on himself.

He claimed to be the Son of God and the Saviour of the world – the one whose appearing had been predicted in the Scriptures.

His claims are supported by his character and his teachings, the many miracles he performed in public, his fulfilment of Old Testament prophecies, and by his resurrection from the dead.

There was no precedent to this anywhere in history. None of his disciples could have thought it up, let alone convince anyone else that it was true.

A careful examination of the evidence supports Christ's claim to be the Son of God.

This is how God showed his love among us: He sent his one and only Son into the world that we might live through him (1 John 4:9).