

Hunter Whiddon

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The Deity of Jesus Christ

John 1:1–3

The importance of the doctrine of the deity of Christ can scarcely be over-estimated. We have seen that the Lord Jesus Christ does not sustain the same relationship to Christianity that other founders of religions have to the belief-systems they originated.

Buddha (563-484 B.C.), Confucius (551-478 B.C.), Mohammed (570-632 A.D.), etc., are significant primarily for their teaching — whereas Jesus Christ is significant first and foremost for His PERSON.

The fact that He IS God manifested in the flesh makes Him the unique character of all human history.

Proofs for the deity of Christ fall under two categories: First, the statements of scripture which expressly declare Him to be God; second, the statements of scripture which, by themselves or when compared with others, of necessity imply or demonstrate His deity.

We shall examine both of these categories this morning.

I. SCRIPTURES EXPRESSLY DECLARING THE DEITY OF CHRIST

The Bible clearly states that the Lord Jesus Christ is co-equal, co-eternal, and co-essential with the Father and the Holy Ghost. The following passages are the primary proofs of His deity:

A. IN THE GOSPEL ACCORDING TO JOHN:

Since this is “the Gospel of Deity,” we would expect to find a number of clear references to the deity of Christ here, and we do.

1. John 1:1-3.

1 In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. **2** The same was in the beginning with God. **3** All things were made by him; and without him was not any thing made that was made.

So potent is this passage that the Jehovah’s Witness cult re-wrote the “Bible” (calling it the New World Translation) to say Jesus is ‘a god!’

2. John 5:18.

18 Therefore the Jews sought the more to kill him, because he not only had broken the sabbath, but said also that God was his Father, making himself equal with God.

The Jews clearly recognized the claims of Christ when He referred to Himself as the “Son of God.” (A Son must be the same in essence as his father!)

3. John 5:23.

23 That all men should honour the Son, even as they honour the Father. He that honoureth not the Son honoureth not the Father which hath sent him.

This verse ought to confront members of the Jehovah's Witness cult — from their own perverted "Bible"!!

4. John 10:30.

30 I and my Father are one.

The word "one" here does not mean "one — as in full agreement," but "one — in essence!" This is how the Jews understood it, verses 31,33, and Jesus did not correct them.

5. John 12:45.

45 And he that seeth me seeth him that sent me.

Jesus Christ was (and is) a visible manifestation of God.

6. John 14:9.

9 Jesus saith unto him, Have I been so long time with you, and yet hast thou not known me, Philip? **he that hath seen me hath seen the Father;** and how sayest thou then, Show us the Father?

To see Christ was to see God in the flesh.

7. John 20:28.

28 And Thomas answered and said unto him, My Lord and my God.

The Lord did not rebuke Thomas for his declaration.

B. IN THE BOOK OF ACTS:

Compare Acts 16:31 And they said, Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved, and thy house.

Acts 16:34 And when he had brought them into his house, he set meat before them, and rejoiced, believing in God with all his house.

1. verse 31 — “believe on the Lord Jesus Christ.”
2. verse 34 — “believing in God.”

C. IN THE BOOK OF ROMANS

Romans 9:5 Whose are the fathers, and of whom as concerning the flesh Christ came, who is over all, God blessed for ever. Amen.

The all-important punctuation of this verse has been altered in many of the modern versions of the Bible.

D. IN THE BOOK OF I TIMOTHY

I Timothy 3:16 “And without controversy great is the mystery of godliness: GOD was manifest in the flesh...”

This is another verse which has been corrupted out of most versions, which usually change the word “God” to “who” or “he.”

E. IN THE BOOK OF TITUS:

Compare

Titus 1:3 But hath in due times manifested his word through preaching, which is committed unto me according to the commandment of God our Saviour;

Titus 1:4 To Titus, mine own son after the common faith: Grace, mercy, and peace, from God the Father and the Lord Jesus Christ our Saviour.

1. verse 3 — declares God to be our Saviour.
2. verse 4 — declares the Lord Jesus Christ to be our Saviour. See also: Titus 2:13.

F. IN THE BOOK OF HEBREWS:

“But unto the SON he saith, Thy throne, O GOD, is for ever and ever: a sceptre of righteousness is the sceptre of thy kingdom” — Hebrews 1:8.

G. IN THE EPISTLE OF I JOHN:

“And we know that the Son of God is come, and hath given us an understanding, that we may know him that is true, and we are in him that is true, even in his Son Jesus Christ. THIS is the true GOD, and eternal life” — I John 5:20.

The word “this” is clearly referring to Jesus Christ.

H. IN THE EPISTOLARY SALUTATIONS:

Several epistles use expressions such as, "...from God our Father, and from the Lord Jesus Christ..." in their salutations — e.g. II Corinthians 1:2.

At first glance these statements may appear to be separating the two Persons — though in reality they merely distinguish the two Persons. (The salutation of Colossians 1:2,3 is interesting, for these verses distinguish "God," and "Father," and "Christ.")

II. SCRIPTURES IMPLYING THE DEITY OF CHRIST

By comparing certain passages relating to the Lord Jesus Christ with others relating to God or the Father, we can deduce many strong proofs for the deity of Christ. These make up the secondary proofs of the deity of Christ. For example:

A. JESUS CHRIST POSSESSES THE ATTRIBUTES OF GOD:

The attributes of God, particularly His natural attributes, are unique to deity.

1. The Natural Attributes Of God Ascribed To Jesus Christ.

a. Omniscience.

- Christ knew all things — John 16:30.

- He knew what was in man — John 2:24,25.
- He saw Nathaniel under the fig tree — John 1:47-49.
- He knew the history of the Samaritan woman — John 4:29.
- He knew the thoughts of men — Matthew 9:4; 12:25; 27:18:

Mark 2:6-8; Luke 6:8.

- He knew the time and the manner of His departure from this world — Matthew 16:21; John 12:33; 13:1.

- He knew who would betray Him — John 6:64,70,71.
- He knew the course of this present age — Matthew 24:25.

“In him are all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge hidden” — Colossians 2:3.

b. Omnipotence.

- Christ declared He was “the Almighty” — Revelation 1:8.
- He had the power to do the things of God — John 5:19.
- He upholds the created universe with His power — Hebrews

1:3.

- He has “all power” — Matthew 28:18. cf. Matthew 10:1.
- He had power over devils and evil spirits — Matthew 8:16; Mark 5:11-15, disease — Luke 4:38-41, death — Matthew 9:25; Luke 7:14,15; John 11:43,44, the elements — Matthew 8:26,27, nature — Matthew 21:19; John 2:11.

The Bible cites all of these points as proof of the deity of Christ. See: John 5:36.

c. Omnipresence.

- Christ was in Heaven while he was bodily present on the earth — John 3:13.
- Christ is on the earth while He is presently in Heaven — Matthew 18:20; 28:20.
- Christ fills all — Ephesians 1:23.

d. Eternality.

“Who is made, not after the law of a carnal commandment, but after the power of an endless life” — Hebrews 7:16.

- Christ was before John the Baptist (c. 5 B.C.) — John 1:15.
- Christ was before Abraham (c. 2000 B.C.) — John 8:58.
- Christ was before the world was created (c. 4000 B.C.) — John 1:1; 17:5,24.
- Jesus Christ is the “firstborn” of every creature — Colossians 1:15, being in existence “in the beginning” — John 1:1; I John 1:1.
- As to the future, He continues forever — Hebrews 1:11; Revelation 1:11a.

Note regarding the term “Firstborn:”

Those who deny the deity of Christ insist that the term “firstborn” applied to Christ means He was “born” — i.e. that He had a definite, finite beginning.

However, the Bible uses the term “firstborn” as a title expressing relationship with no thought of generation necessarily connected to it.

i. Isaac was Abraham’s “firstborn” because he was called the “only son” (Genesis 22:2,12,16) and the “only begotten son” (Hebrews 11:17). Yet we know Ishmael was also Abraham’s son, and he was born first!

ii. The firstborn of both man and beast was considered as belonging to God — Exodus 13:12; Numbers 3:13. (The Levites were later substituted for Israel’s firstborn — Numbers 3:12.)

iii. The firstborn son received the “birthright” which included the headship of the family and a double portion of his father’s estate. In most cases, the son born first was the firstborn, but not in every case. See: Genesis 19:19,32; 47:14,17-19.

e. Immutability.

Christ is said to be unchanging — Hebrews 1:11,12; 13:8.

Charismatics and others often cite Hebrews 13:8 as proof for the continuation of the signs and wonders (healings, etc.) done by the Lord to this present day.

However, this verse is referring to the fact that the Lord is the same in His Person and attributes — not necessarily in His workings, as scripture clearly teaches.

f. Unity.

“I and my Father are one” — John 10:30.

“For there are three that bear record in heaven, the Father, the Word, and the Holy Ghost: and these three are one” — I John 5:7.

g. Life.

See: John 1:4; 5:26; 11:25; 14:6.

2. The Moral Attributes Of God Ascribed To Jesus Christ.

a. Holiness.

Christ is absolutely holy and without sin — I John 3:5; completely pure — I John 3:3; and Light — John 8:12.

Even those who were His enemies declare the sinlessness of Christ many times in the Word of God. For example:

i. The unclean spirits — Mark 1:23,24.

ii. Judas Iscariot — Matthew 27:3,4.

iii. Pontius Pilate — John 18:38.

iv. Pilate's wife — Matthew 27:19.

v. The dying thief — Luke 23:41.

vi. The Roman centurion — Luke 23:47.

Numerous scriptures testify that Jesus Christ was and is holy, just, and without sin. See: John 8:46; Acts 3:14; 22:14; II Corinthians 5:21; Hebrews 4:15; 7:26.

Jesus hated sin — Hebrews 1:9; He did not sin — I Peter 2:22; demanded holiness in others — Matthew 5:48; and rebuked those who did sin — Matthew 16:23; John 4:17,18; 8:11.

His death on the cross reveals the true attitude of the Lord Jesus Christ toward sin.

b. Love.

Jesus Christ is the greatest expression and demonstration of love ever.

Christ exhibits divine love by loving:

- The Father — John 14:31.
- Lost sinners — Romans 5:8.
- Believers — Galatians 2:20c.
- Obedient disciples — John 14:21.
- His churches — Ephesians 5:25.
- His enemies — Luke 23:34.
- His own kindred — John 19:25-27. I
- Children — Mark 10:13-16.

The Lord Jesus Christ manifests His great love in every possible way — to the Father, by His perfect obedience to His Father's will and in seeking His glory; to mankind, by seeking them, saving them, and sorrowing after those who would reject Him.

c. Truth — John 14:6.

The Word of God is also called the “Word of Christ” (Colossians 3:16), and it is the Word of Truth (II Corinthians 6:7; Ephesians 1:13; James 1:18).