Is Jesus God?

Jesus & God · https://thebiblicalroots.org/answers/is-jesus-god/

Yes. The Bible clearly teaches that Jesus is truly God and truly man—one person with two natures. He is not merely a great teacher or prophet, but the eternal Son of God who took on human flesh for our salvation (John 1:1, 14; Col 2:9). To know Jesus rightly is to recognize Him as fully divine, worthy of worship, and equal with the Father.

The New Testament presents the deity of Christ through multiple, converging lines of evidence. Some passages state it directly. John opens his Gospel with the unmistakable claim: “the Word was God” (John 1:1), and then identifies that Word as Jesus (John 1:14). Likewise, Thomas the Apostle confesses to the risen Christ, “My Lord and my God!” (John 20:28), and Jesus does not correct him. Paul affirms that “in him the whole fullness of deity dwells bodily” (Col 2:9), leaving no room for a diminished or partial divinity.

Other texts demonstrate Jesus’ deity by what He does. He forgives sins (Mark 2:5–7), something Scripture teaches belongs to God alone (Isa 43:25). He receives worship (Matt 14:33; Heb 1:6), exercises authority over creation (Mark 4:39–41), and claims preexistence using the divine name: “Before Abraham was, I am” (John 8:58), echoing Yahweh’s self-identification in Exodus 3:14. These are not incidental details—they are theological claims embedded in narrative form.

From a theological standpoint, the early church articulated this truth using the language of *μία οὐσία, τρεῖς ὑποστάσεις* (“one essence, three persons”) to describe the Trinity. Jesus is distinct from the Father (John 17:5), yet shares fully in the divine nature (Phil 2:6). This formulation was not an invention but a necessary synthesis of the biblical data. While all orthodox Christian traditions affirm the deity of Christ, differences emerge in how His divine and human natures relate (e.g., Chalcedonian vs. non-Chalcedonian formulations), though these are minority distinctions.

This doctrine is not abstract theology—it is central to the Gospel. Only if Jesus is truly God can His atoning work have infinite value (Heb 9:14), and only if He is truly man can He represent us as our substitute (1 Tim 2:5). The incarnation is therefore not optional—it is essential.

Key Scriptures to Study

Core teaching passages

- **John 1:1, 14** — Jesus (the Word) is God and became flesh
- **John 20:28** — Thomas explicitly calls Jesus “My Lord and my God”
- **Colossians 2:9** — The fullness of deity dwells bodily in Christ
- **Hebrews 1:8** — The Father addresses the Son as “O God”

Supporting theological framework

- **Philippians 2:6–7** — Jesus shares the form of God yet humbles Himself
- **John 8:58** — Jesus claims the divine name “I AM”
- **Matthew 28:19** — Jesus is included in the singular divine name of the Trinity

Clarifying or balancing passages

- **John 17:3** — Distinction between Father and Son within the Godhead
- **1 Timothy 2:5** — Jesus as mediator, emphasizing His true humanity

Objections & Misconceptions

Common Objection: “Jesus never directly said, ‘I am God.’”
Response: Jesus often revealed His identity in ways consistent with first-century Jewish categories rather than modern philosophical language. His claims to forgive sins (Mark 2:5–7), accept worship (Matt 14:33), and identify Himself with Yahweh (John 8:58) would have been unmistakable to His audience—so much so that His opponents accused Him of blasphemy (John 10:33).

Common Objection: “Isn’t Jesus just the Son of God, not God Himself?”
Response: In biblical usage, “Son of God” is not a lesser title—it signifies sharing in God’s nature (John 5:18). The Jewish leaders understood this and sought to kill Him precisely because He was “making himself equal with God.”

Common Objection: “Didn’t Jesus say the Father is greater than Him (John 14:28)?”
Response: Yes—but this refers to His incarnate, humbled state, not His eternal nature. Philippians 2:6–7 explains that although He was equal with God, He took on the form of a servant. The distinction is between role and essence, not between deity and non-deity.

Why This Matters

If Jesus is not God, then the Gospel collapses. A merely human savior cannot bear the full weight of sin or conquer death. But because Jesus is God in the flesh, His life, death, and resurrection accomplish what no one else could: full atonement, true reconciliation, and eternal life (Heb 10:10–14).

Practically, this means our faith is not placed in a moral teacher but in the living God. It grounds Christian worship (Rev 5:12–13), assures us of salvation (John 10:28–30), and calls us to trust Christ with ultimate authority over our lives.

Recommended Resources

- *Mere Christianity* – C. S. Lewis
- *The Case for Christ* – Lee Strobel
- *Delighting in the Trinity* – Michael Reeves
- *Jesus and the God of Israel* – Richard Bauckham
- *The Person of Christ* – Stephen Wellum