

THE DEITY OF JESUS CHRIST

We can historically prove the existence/life of the man, Jesus of Nazareth through the written documents other than the Bible

- [1] **Josephus** (Jewish Historian, AD37-100) "Antiquities XX 9:1, xvii.33" Arabic Text
- [2] **Cornelius Tacitus** (Roman Historian, AD55?-after 117) "Annals XV.44"
- [3] **Lucian** (Greek Satirist, 2nd Cent AD) "On the Death of Peregrine"
- [4] **Suetonius** (Roman Historian, c. AD120) "Life of Claudius 25.4", "Lives of the Caesars 26.2"
- [5] **Pliny the Younger** (c. AD112) "Epistles X.96"
- [6] **Thallus** (Samaritan-born Historian, c. AD52) "third book of his histories"-- Julius Africanus (c. AD221)
- [7] **Letter of Mara Bar-Sarapion** (after AD73), letter in the British Museum
- [8] **The Jewish Talmud** (completed by AD 500) Sanhedrin 43a, "Eve of Passover", Yeb. IV 3; 49a

Combining the above secular testimony to Christ, we get the following picture:

- Jesus was crucified under Pontius Pilate at Passover time
- He was believed by His Disciples to have risen from the dead three days later
- The Jewish leaders charged Christ with sorcery and believed He was born in adultery
- The Judean sect of Christianity could not be contained, but spread even to Rome
- Nero and other Roman rulers bitterly persecuted and martyred early Christians
- These early Christians denied polytheism, lived dedicated lives according to Christ's teachings, and worshiped Christ. *This picture is perfectly congruent with that of the New Testament.* (**Christian Apologetics**, Norman Geisler, p. 325)

Many, Many fulfilled Old Testament prophecies show the Deity of Jesus

His Birth

Offspring of a woman/Genesis 3:15
Offspring of Abraham/Genesis 12:3
Offspring of Isaac/Genesis 17:19
Offspring of Jacob/Numbers 24:17
Tribe of Judah/ Genesis 49:10
Throne of David/Isaiah 9:7
Place of birth/Micah 5:2
Time of Birth/Daniel 9:25
"Immanuel"/Isaiah 7:14
Born of a virgin/Isaiah 7:14
Slaughter of infants/Jeremiah 31:15
Escape into Egypt/Hosea 11:1

His Life

Ministry in Galilee/Isaiah 9:1,2
Rejected by His people/Isaiah 53:3
He'd be a great Prophet/Deuteronomy 18:15
He'd be a Priest/Psalm 110:4
Characteristics/Isaiah 11:2-4
Triumphal entry/Zechariah 9:9, Isaiah 62:11

His Death & Burial

Betrayed by a Friend/Psalm 41:9
Sold for 30 pieces of silver/Zechariah 11:12,13
\$\$ used for the potter's field/ Zechariah 11:13
False witnesses accuse Him/Psalm 27:12
Silent when accused/ Isaiah 53:7
Struck and spit on/Isaiah 50:6

Hated without a cause/Psalm 69:4, 109:3-5
Suffered vicariously/Isaiah 53:4-6
Crucified with criminals/Isaiah 53:12
Mocked & insulted/Psalm 22:6-8
Not a bone broken/Psalm 34:20
Hands and feet pierced/Psalm 22:16, Zechariah 12:10
Given gall & vinegar/Psalm 69:21
Hears prophetic words repeated in mockery/Psalm 22:8
Prays for his enemies/Psalm 109:4
Isaiah 53:12, side to be pierced/Zechariah 12:10
Soldiers gamble for his clothes/Psalm 22:18
Buried with the rich/Isaiah 53:9
His Resurrection/Psalm 16:1
His Ascension/Psalm 68:18
Judas's position filled/Psalm 109:7,8

Jesus claimed to be Deity (John 10:30)

Examining Jesus' claims to Deity

1) *Titles from the OT that God claimed for Himself, Jesus also claimed for Himself:*

Shepherd (John 10:11/Psalm 23:1)

Judge (John 5:27/Joel 3:12)

Light of the World (John 8:12/Isaiah 60:19)

Shared Eternal Glory (John 17:5/Isaiah 42:8)

Coming Bridegroom (Matthew 25:1/Isaiah 62:5)

First & Last (Revelation 1:17/Isaiah 42:8)

I AM (John 8:58/Exodus 3:14)

2) *Jesus's claims to be equal to God:*

Could forgive sins (Mark 2:10,11/Jeremiah 31:34)

Could raise and judge the dead (John 5:25,29/Psalm 2:7, Joel 3:12)

Honor the Son and the Father (John 5:23)

Believe in the Son and the Father (John 14:1)

3) *Jesus' claims to be the Messiah/God:*

Psalm 110:1/Matthew 22:43-44; Daniel 7:13,22/Mark 14:61-64

4) *Jesus' acceptance of Worship:*

See Exodus 20:3,4!!

healed leper/Matthew 8:2

ruler/Matthew 9:18

those in the boat/Matthew 14:33

Canaanite woman/Matthew 15:25

Mother of sons of Zebedee/Matthew 20:20

Jesus' followers/Matthew 28:17, 28:9

Women at the tomb/ Matthew 28:9

Garasene demoniac/Mark 5:6

Blind man/John 9:38

Thomas/John 20:28

5) *Authority of Jesus' Commands:*

Matthew 5:21,22, 28:18,19, 5:18, 24:35

John 12:48, 13:34

6) *Jesus requested men pray in His name:*

John 14:6, 13,14, 15:7

1 Corinthians 5:4

Acts 7:59 (prayed to Christ)

Others who claimed His Deity

God claimed it too (Matthew 3:16,17, 17:5)

So did John the Baptist (John 1:1-36)

Peter (Matthew 16:16)

John (John 20:28, 1:1, 1 John 5:20 and many accounts from his Revelation)

Thomas (John 20:28)

Paul (Romans 9:5, Philippians 2:5-8, 2 Corinthians 4:4, Colossians 1:15,19, 2:9,13, Titus 2:13)

The writer of Hebrews (1:3,8)

Even the demons that Jesus cast out of people (Mark 5:6)

* * **NOTE**--some alleged counter-claims against the Deity of Christ:

- † Jesus said, "My Father is greater than I" (John 14:28). God the Father is greater in office, but not in nature. Jesus was subordinate in function, but not in essence. John 5:18, 10:30
- † Jesus didn't know when He'd return again. (Mark 13:32). In His human nature, He knew limitations---figs on fig tree (Matthew 21:19), schooling (Luke 2:52). He knew human limitations not known in His infinite Godhood, such as no longer being omnipresent.
- † Jesus said no one was good but God (Mark 10:18). Jesus did not deny that He was good or that He was God to the rich young ruler. Jesus said to him, in essence, "Do you realize what you are saying? Are you calling me God?" Jesus' reply left only 2 alternative responses: 1-Jesus is good & God, 2-Jesus is bad & human.
- † Jesus cried out to His Father from the cross (Mark 15:34). Several other examples are seen in parts of the Godhead ("Trinity") speaking to the other parts (Psalm 110:1, see also Jesus' baptism [Matthew 3:13-17] & transfiguration [Matthew 17:1-13]) -----all these critiques taken from *Norman Geisler*

"Christian Apologetics", p334,335

- 1) *The claims of Jesus' Disciples that He was God:* (see Deuteronomy 6:4 & John 10:30)

† Jesus was given names of Deity: *First & Last* by John in Revelation 1:17, 2:8

† *Light* by John in John 1:9

- ✠ *Rock* by the Disciples in 1 Corinthians 10:4
- ✠ *Stone* by Peter in 1 Peter 2:6-8
- ✠ *Husband/Bridegroom* by Paul & John in Ephesians 5:28-33 and in Revelation 21:2
- ✠ *Shepherd* by Peter in 1 Peter 5:4
- ✠ *in His Name, sins are forgiven* by Apostles in Acts 5:31
- ✠ *Redeemer* by Paul in Titus 2:13
- ✠ *Savior* by John in John 4:42
- ✠ *Lord of Glory* by Paul in 1 Corinthians 2:8
- ✠ *Judge* by Paul in 2 Timothy 4:1

2) *Jesus was considered to be the Messiah:* Many OT Passages are clear that Messiah is GOD: Isaiah 9:6, 7:14>>>Matthew 1:23, Zechariah 12:10, Isaiah 45:22,23>>>Philippians 2:11

✠ Jesus possesses eternal life: 1 John 5:11,12,20, John 1:4

✠ Jesus was given powers possessed only by God

✠ raised the dead-John 5, 11

✠ all things created through Him-John 1:2

✠ Forgive sins-Mark 2:7

✠ see the association of Jesus' Name with God: the Disciples used Jesus' name in Prayer--1 Corinthians 5:4, they prayed to Jesus--Acts 7:59, See Epistles' Salutations/ Benedictions-Galatians 1:3, Ephesians 1:2, 2 Corinthians 13:14, Baptismal Liturgy-Matthew 28:19

3) *Jesus was considered the Creator of the Universe:* John 1:2, Colossians 1:15-17

4) *Jesus was obeyed and worshipped by angels* (Ephesians 1:21, Matthew 8:32, Hebrews 1:5,6)

Jesus' Miraculous Life is Evidence of His Deity---

Jesus' miracles as recorded in the Gospels can be divided into 3 sections:

- (1) *His miracles over Nature,*
- (2) *His miracles over Flesh and*
- (3) *His miracles over the Spiritual Realm*

Jesus' miracles over Nature:

- ✠ changed water to wine at wedding in Cana of Galilee (John 2:1-11)
- ✠ 2 Large catches of fish (Matthew 4:18-22/Mark 1:16-20/Luke 5:1-9/John 1:35-43 and John 21:3-11)
- ✠ calmed the storm on the lake (Matthew 8:23-27/Mark 4:35-41/Luke 8:22-25)
- ✠ feeding the 5000 men (Matthew 14:13-21/Mark 6:31-44/Luke 9:10-17/John 6:1-14)
- ✠ Walking on the water (Matthew 14:22-36/Mark 6:45-54/John 6:15-21)
- ✠ feeding of 4000 men (Matthew 15:30-38/Mark 8:1-9)
- ✠ receiving coins from the fish's mouth (Matthew 17:24-27)
- ✠ withered fig tree (Matthew 21:17-22/Mark 11:12-14, :20-24)
- ✠ cosmic signs at Calvary: 1-Darkness for three hours (Matthew 27:45/Mark 15:33/Luke 23:44), 2-Stones breaking (Matthew 27:51), 3-graves opening and the dead rising (Matthew 27:52-54), 4-earthquake (Matthew 27:51), 5-Temple veil tearing from top to bottom (Matthew 27:51/Mark 15:38/Luke 23:45)
- ✠ Earthquake at the Resurrection & soldiers frightened (Matthew 28:1-4)
- ✠ Jesus' own Ascension (Acts 1:1-11/Mark 16:19/Luke 24:51)

Jesus' miracles over the Flesh:

His conception inside Mary, a virgin (Matthew 1:18-25/Luke 1:26-38)

- ✠ Lepers (Luke 17:11-19)
- ✠ the Blind (John 9:1-41)
- ✠ the Lame (Mark 2:1-12 & John 5:1-18)
- ✠ the Deaf (Mark 7:31-37)
- ✠ the Mute (Matthew 9:32)
- ✠ man with a withered hand (Matthew 12:9-14)
- ✠ woman with the issue of blood (Mark 5:24-34)
- ✠ raised the dead (Jairus's daughter: Mark 5:22-24, :35-43; Widow of Nain's son: Luke 7:11-17; Lazurus at Bethany: John 11:1-46)
- ✠ casting out demons (Luke 4:31-37, 8:26-39, Matthew 17:14-18)

Jesus' miracles over the Spirit Realm:

- ✠ the presence of the Godhead (God the Father/Son/Holy Spirit) with Jesus at His baptism by John at the Jordan (Matthew 3:16,17)

- † Jesus read people's minds (Matthew 9:4, Luke 21:1-4, John 4:16-18)
- † Jesus prophesied (Matthew 21:2,3, 26:18, :34, Acts 1:5)
- † His own Transfiguration (Matthew 17:1-13/Mark 9:1-13/Luke 9:28-36/2 Peter 1:16-18)
- † Jesus slipped away mysteriously through/from the crowds (*Luke 4:30, John 8:59, 7:44, 10:31,39, 6:15?*)
- † Jesus forgave sins (Matthew 9:2/Luke 5:20/23:42,43)
- † Jesus cast out demons (Luke 10:17)
- † Jesus repeatedly defeated Satan:
 - 3 face-to-face temptations (Matthew 4:1-11),
 - exorcisms (Matthew 8:16, Mark 1:34, Luke 8:26-39),
 - 1 John 3:7,8, [d] ultimately (Revelation 19:19-21, 20:7-10)
- † Jesus provided salvation for Mankind at Calvary (Romans 5:8-11, John 19:30--"It is finished!"/"The debt is paid!")
- † His own Resurrection from the dead--this item will be discussed in some detail still to come.

Jesus' Sinless Life Is Evidence of His Deity---see testimonies from:

- † Pontius Pilate--Luke 23:4
- † The soldier at the Crucifixion--Luke 23:47
- † the dying Crucified thief--Luke 23:41,42
- † Peter--1 Peter 1:19
- † John--1 John 2:1, 3:7
- † Paul--2 Corinthians 5:21
- † author of Hebrews(?)--Hebrews 4:15

Jesus' Own Resurrection Is Evidence of His Deity

How can we know that Jesus did resurrect from the dead?

- † It was prophesied about Him (see Section #2 about the many OT Prophecies about Jesus)
- † Jesus prophesied it about Himself (John 2:19,21, Matthew 12:40, Mark 8:31)
- † Witnesses saw His death on the cross and helped with His burial
- † Witnesses saw where Joseph's Tomb was (surely Joseph knew!)
- † Witnesses saw the tomb sealed--you bury dead people! (the Pharisees believed He was dead)
- † Radical changes in the lives of His followers---previously they had fled but shortly afterward were publicly proclaiming Jesus as Messiah, even as they themselves lost their lives.
- † Why die for a lie? It makes no sense that the Apostles would willingly lie about Jesus' resurrection when they were given a chance to recant & live.

‡ It was verifiable--the disciples/Apostles taught/preached/ wrote at a time when anyone could have said they knew of a cover-up or some other kind of deception--no one did.

‡ 14 Post Resurrection appearances of Jesus: *that same day*:

- 1) Mary Magdalene-Mark 16:9-11, John 20:11-18
- 2) The Women-Matthew 28:9,10
- 3) the Two on the Road to Emmaus-Luke 24:13-22
- 4) Peter-1 Corinthians 15:5, Luke 24:36-43, John 20:19ff
- 5) The Ten-Mark 16:14, Luke 24:36, John 20:19ff, *the same day the next week*:
- 6) The Eleven-John 20:26-31,
- 7) the Seven by the Sea of Galilee-John 21:1-23
- 8) the 500 (from the Great Commission context)-1 Corinthians 15:6, Matthew 28:16-20
- 9) In Jerusalem (Great Commission repeated)-Mark 16:15-16, 10)
- 10) James (Jesus' 1/2 brother)-1 Corinthians 15:7
- 11) The Disciples (further Commission)-Acts 1:3-8, Luke 24:44-49
- 12) The Ascension-Acts 1:9-12, Mark 16:19-20, Luke 24:50-53
- 13) Stephen-Acts 7
- 14) Saul/Paul-Acts 9

NOTE--many skeptics, past and present, deny Jesus' bodily resurrection. Some alternative theories proposed are:

{1} "Jesus' enemies stole His body." **Our Response:** Why would they not produce it to put a stop to all the preaching of the Apostles claiming His resurrection? The church grew immediately with excitement, but it all would have been quickly stopped by His enemies if they'd produce His still-dead body.

{2} "Jesus' friends stole His body." **Our Response:** The Apostles then would have known they were lying in their preaching. Why would they go to horrible deaths (as nearly all of them did) if they knew it was all just a hoax they were perpetrating?

{3} "Jesus' followers and friends had hallucinations/dreams of what they wanted to see." **Our Response:** Different numbers of people saw Him in various places and times and settings. It's hard to imagine they all experienced the same delusion!

{4} "Jesus wasn't really dead on the cross, but revived in the tomb and escaped in shame." **Our Response:** John records that the soldiers at Calvary didn't break Christ's legs, as they did to the 2 thieves, because they testified that He was already dead (John 19:33) and that blood and water came from His side as He was pierced while on the cross (John 19:34). His body was removed from the cross and prepared for burial. Surely, they would have known in the time

needed for this if He were still alive or was now dead! Jesus was weak and exhausted, and could not have lifted the 75 pounds of spices off His chest and then rolled away the large stone covering the cave-tomb.

{5} "The Historical Records have been tampered with/the church fabricated the whole story." **Our Response:** Christ's resurrection was the very core of the Gospel message. Why would the early church base their whole focus upon a deception? Why make up something that could be so easily disproved? That message has not changed since the start of the Church on the Day of Pentecost in Acts 2, and has been spread consistently throughout all levels of documentation regarding the early church, from sources both spiritual and secular.

6) The **Calendar** year is now AD2025. The "AD" is Latin for "anno domine," meaning, "in the year of our Lord." Time long ago was reckoned as "BC," meaning "before Christ." Christ's advent into the world has changed the way the world counts time. This affects everyone on earth. Could a mere man be honored in such a worldwide way?

7) Look at **the efforts to oppose** God, the Church, the Bible & Jesus. If these were not real historical entities, then they would crumble under their own grandiose claims. As it is, they continue to spread & change/improve lives and cultures offering hope, direction and peace to a world struggling through the darkness. Why go to all the trouble that the late Madelyn Murray O'Hair did to fight something that is non-existent? Why bother??

The only real choices that we have are these:

(1) **Jesus was a liar.** He was a clever, manipulative deceiver of the people. *That is very hard to believe since He had no choice about the time and place and circumstances surrounding His own birth and too, why would He die a horrible death of crucifixion for a deliberate hoax?

(2) **Jesus was a lunatic.** He thought He was something greater than He actually was and was deceived to believe it Himself. *How do we explain away all the miracles, the change in the lives of the early Christians, and the complete lack of evidence of any such kind of a controversy?

(3) **Jesus was & IS the LORD.** If we accept His claims and the corroborating evidence that backs it all up, He was Who He said He was & certainly still **is** today, our King of kings and Lord of lords, the long promised Messiah, the Son of God and, in fact our God Jehovah Incarnate!