

Foundations of the Faith 103
Systematic Theology
“Christology”
The Deity of Christ
Pt. 18

Introduction - During the early centuries of the church’s history there were groups that denied the true humanity of Christ. Today this is not the case. Today it’s the deity of Christ that is under attack!

Jesus asked, “Who do men say I am?”

C.S. Lewis - a liar, a lunatic, or Lord.

The Bible clearly teaches that Jesus is God!

I. The Importance of Christ’s Deity

- A. God’s Triunity
- B. Christ Substitutionary Death
- C. It’s the Bedrock of Christianity

II. Jesus Claimed to Be God

1. Jesus claimed to be Yahweh (Jehovah) Isa. 44:6

Yahweh (YHWH) or Jehovah is the special name given by God for Himself in the Old Testament. It is the name revealed to Moses in Exodus 3:14, when God said, “I AM WHO I AM.” While other titles for God may be used of men (adonai [LORD] in Genesis 18:12) or false gods (elohim [gods] in Deuteronomy 6:14), Yahweh is only used to refer to the one true god. No other person or thing was to be worshiped or served (Ex. 20:5), and His name and glory were not to be given to another. Isaiah wrote, “Thus saith Jehovah... I am the first, and the last; and besides me there is no God” (Isa. 44:6), and, “I am Jehovah, that is my name; and my glory I will not give to another, neither my praise unto graven images” (42:8).

Jesus prayed, “And now, Father, glorify me in your presence with the glory I had with you before the world began” (John 17:5 - this is an obvious claim for Christ’s deity, for Jehovah of the Old Testament said, “My glory will I not give to another” [Jesus also declared, “I am the First and the Last” (Rev. 1:17)- precisely the words used by Jehovah in Isaiah 44:6, He said, “I am the good shepherd,” (John 10:11), and the Old Testament said, “Jehovah is my shepherd” (Ps. 23:1). Further, Jesus claimed to be the judge of all men (John 5:27ff.; Matt. 25:31ff.), and Joel quotes Jehovah as saying, “There I will sit to judge all the nations on every side” (Joel 3:12) Likewise, Jesus spoke of Himself as the “bridegroom” (Matt. 25:1f.) while the Old Testament identifies Jehovah in this way

(Isa. 62:5; Hosea 2:16). While the psalmist declares, “Jehovah is my light” (Ps.27:1), Jesus said, “I am the light of the world” (John 8:12).

Perhaps the strongest claim Jesus made to be Jehovah is in John 8:58, where He says, “Before Abraham was born I Am!” This statement claims not only existence before Abraham, but equality with the “I AM” of Exodus 3:14. The Jews around Him clearly understood His meaning and picked up stones to kill Him for blaspheming (cf. John 10:31-33). The same claim is also made in Mark 14:62 and John 18:5-6.

2. Jesus claimed to be equal with God.

A. Jesus claimed for Himself the prerogatives of God. Mark 2:1-7, key vs. 5.

B. John 5:25-29, key vs. 21. Only God is the giver of life, 1Sam. 2:6; Deut. 32:39.

C. Jesus said He should be honored as God! John 5:23; John 5:17-18

3. Jesus claimed to have equal authority with God.

• Matt. 5:21, 22 & vs. 27, 28, 31, 32, 33, 34, 38, 39, 43, 44 & Matt. 28:16-20

4. Jesus claimed to be God by requesting prayer in His name.

• John 14:13-14

• **Illustration** - Stephen’s prayer at his stoning. Acts 7:59

5. Jesus claimed to be God by His use of parables.

In his Cambridge doctoral dissertation on this topic, Philip B. Payne notes that out of Jesus’ fifty-two recorded narrative parables, twenty depict him in imagery which in the [Old Testament] typically refers to God. The frequency with which this occurs indicates that Jesus regularly depicted himself in images which were particularly appropriate for depicting God. (Payne, “JICP” in *TJ*, 17)

III. Jesus Deity seen in His Names and Titles

1. God - John 1:1; Heb. 1:8 & Titus 2:13

2. Lord - John 20:28 & Phil. 2:11

3. Son of God - John 5:25 & 10:36

4. The First and Last - Rev. 1:17 & Isa. 41:4