

## ***IS JESUS CHRIST GOD?***

### **Colossians 2:9**

**By Andy Manning**

#### **I. INTRODUCTION**

- a. Is Jesus Christ God?
  - i. Mormonism says He is a god, but not as great as God the Father.
  - ii. Jehovah's Witnesses say he is not God, but an angel.
  - iii. Judaism says "no."
  - iv. Islam says He is not God, but only a prophet.
  - v. Christian Science says He is not God; He was merely the highest human concept of the perfect man, but not to be worshipped.
  - vi. Unitarianism says Jesus was merely a human being.
  - vii. Atheism says that Jesus is not God because there is no God.
  - viii. Hinduism says that Jesus is only one of many gods; it also says that all is God.
- b. What does Christianity say about Jesus? Christianity believes what the Bible says about Jesus. Today we are going to look at the clearest verse in the Bible about the deity of Christ.

#### **II. TEXT**

- a. **Colossians 2:9** "For the entire fullness of God's nature dwells bodily in Christ."
- b. Is Jesus Christ God? Yes! This verse makes it unmistakably clear. Notice six facts about the deity of Christ.

#### **III. 6 FACTS ABOUT THE DEITY OF CHRIST**

- a. **Christians must not be led astray by any philosophy not based on Christ.**
  - i. Colossians 2:9 "For the entire fullness of God's nature dwells bodily in Christ."
  - ii. "For". Can be translated "because." Tied to the preceding verse. Verse 8 says do not be led astray by teachings that are not based on Christ. Philosophies not based on His teachings. Philosophies not based on His nature. Philosophies that are not based on the preeminence, supremacy, and centrality of Christ.
  - iii. Why? Because Christ is God. As God, His word is true; His will is law. He is the way, the truth, and the life (Jn 14:6).
  - iv. 4 Philosophies Not Based on Christ:
    1. Philosophies that *distract* from Christ.
      - a. Prosperity theology distracts us from Christ and draws our attention to health, wealth, and success.
      - b. Some Bible prophecy experts distract us from Christ and draw our attention to Bible Prophecy.
      - c. Charismatic theology distracts us from Christ and draws our attention to the gifts and manifestations of the Holy Spirit.
      - d. Roman Catholic theology distracts us from Christ to and draws our attention to Mary.

2. Philosophies that *detract* from Christ. Philosophies that decrease Christ's significance:
  - a. Mormonism says Christ is a god, but not the only God.
  - b. Roman Catholicism says that Christ is God, but that you also need Mary.
  - c. Universalists say that Christ is not the only way to heaven.
3. Philosophies that *depart* from Christ. Philosophies that deny the deity of Christ: Islam, Judaism, Jehovah's Witnesses, atheists.
4. Philosophies that disagree with Christ. Philosophies that contradict the teachings of Christ.

**b. Christ possesses all of God's attributes.**

- i. Colossians 2:9 "For the entire fullness of God's nature dwells bodily in Christ."
- ii. "Entire." All of God's nature dwells in Christ. All of God's attributes dwell in Christ.
- iii. God's attributes are His essential characteristics that make Him who He is (ESV Study Bible).
- iv. God's attributes can be divided into two categories:
  1. God's greatness:
    - a. Jesus is omnipotent. He can do all His holy will. Job 42:2 "I know that you can do anything and no plan of yours can be thwarted."
    - b. Jesus is omnipresent. Psalm 139:7-8 "Where can I go to escape your Spirit? Where can I flee from your presence? If I go up to heaven, you are there; if I make my bed in Sheol, you are there."
    - c. Jesus is omniscient. Isaiah 40:28 "There is no limit to His understanding."
    - d. Jesus is eternal. Psalm 90:2 "Before the mountains were born, before you gave birth to the earth and the world, from eternity to eternity, you are God."
  2. God's goodness:
    - a. Jesus is love. 1 John 4:8 "God is love."
    - b. Jesus is holy. 1 Samuel 2:2 "There is no one holy like the LORD."
- v. Theologians often distinguish between God's communicable attributes, and God's incommunicable attributes. God's communicable attributes are those that He shares with us (or communicates with us). His incommunicable attributes are those that He does not share (or communicate) with us.
  1. Communicable attributes: Love. God is love, and we have the capacity to love, too. Knowledge. God has knowledge, and we have the ability to know things as well. Justice. God is just, and we are able to be just.
  2. Incommunicable attributes: Eternity. God is eternal, with no beginning. We have a beginning. Immutability (unchangeableness).

God never changes, but we change. Omnipresent. God is present everywhere at the same time, but we are only present in one place at a time.

3. The fact that the “entire” fullness of God’s nature dwells in Christ means that Jesus Christ possesses both the communicable and incommunicable attributes of God.

**c. Christ possesses God’s attributes in their fullness.**

- i. Colossians 2:9 “For the entire fullness of God’s nature dwells bodily in Christ.”
- ii. “Fullness.” Christ does not just possess all of God’s attributes, but all of God’s attributes in their fullness.
- iii. We are holy, but we are not fully holy. We can be loving, but we can never be fully loving. We are truthful, but we can never be fully truthful. We have knowledge, but we are not fully knowledgeable.
- iv. But Jesus Christ has the fullness of God’s nature.
  1. John 1:14 says that Jesus is “full of grace and truth.”
  2. John 1:16 “we have all received grace upon grace from his fullness”
  3. Colossians 1:19 “For God was pleased to have all his fullness dwell in him.”
- v. This is a rebuke to those who say that Jesus is not equal to God the Father.

**d. Christ is God.**

- i. Colossians 2:9 “For the entire fullness of God’s nature dwells bodily in Christ.”
- ii. “God’s nature.” Greek, *Theotes*. Divinity. God’s essence. *Theotes* refers not merely to God’s attributes, but to His essence. The entire fullness of what makes God, God, dwells in Christ.
- iii. This is perhaps the clearest way that Paul could express the deity of Christ.
- iv. Christ is not a god; He is not a lesser god; He is God almighty. He is Yahweh, the God of the Old Testament. He is the God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob. He is the God who created the universe. He is the God who cast Adam and Eve out of the garden. He is the God who destroyed the earth with the flood. He is the God who performed miracles and wonders in delivering the children of Israel out of Egypt.
- v. Consider: God’s attributes are what make Him God. There is only one God. Since the entire fullness of God’s nature, all of God’s essence, dwells in Christ, then Christ is God.

**e. Christ will always be God.**

- i. Colossians 2:9 “For the entire fullness of God’s nature dwells bodily in Christ.”
- ii. “Dwells.” Not dwelt. Not will dwell. Notice the present tense. The word means to permanently dwell; to be at home; to be permanently settled and present.
- iii. **Expositors Bible Commentary** “The full thought, then, is that in Christ the fullness of deity permanently resides, finding a settled home in him.”

- iv. This tells us:
  1. The fulness of God dwelt in Christ when he was walking on the earth. Christ did not give up His deity when He came to earth and took on a human body. He was fully God.
  2. The fullness of God permanently dwells in Christ. It was not just a temporary gift. Christ is in heaven today, and He is fully God.

**f. Christ is fully God and fully human.**

- i. Colossians 2:9 “For the entire fullness of God’s nature dwells bodily in Christ.”
- ii. “Bodily.”
- iii. Jesus permanently took on a human body. And at the same time He is God. He is fully human and fully God. His humanity does not diminish His deity. His deity does not decrease His humanity.
- iv. **The Westminster Confession of Faith**, written in 1643, expresses the mystery this way: “The Son of God, the second Person in the Trinity, being very and eternal God, of one substance, and equal with the Father, did, when the fullness of time was come, take upon him man's nature, with all the essential properties and common infirmities thereof, yet without sin: being conceived by the power of the Holy Ghost, in the womb of the Virgin Mary, of her substance. So that two whole, perfect, and distinct natures, the Godhead and the manhood, were inseparably joined together in one person, without conversion, composition, or confusion. Which person is very God and very man, yet one Christ, the only Mediator between God and man.”

**IV. MORE SUPPORT FOR THE DEITY OF CHRIST.** We would not want to base such an important doctrine as the deity of Christ on just one verse, even though Colossians 2:9 is crystal clear. Is there any more Biblical support for the deity of Christ?

- a. Christ’s direct claims.
  - i. Some, like Jehovah’s Witnesses, say that Jesus never claimed to be God. But Jesus did claim to be God. In John 8, Jesus told the Jews that Abraham rejoiced to see His day; that Abraham, from thousands of years ago, knew about Jesus. The people mocked Him and said, “You aren’t even fifty years old, and you’ve seen Abraham.” Jesus answered, “Truly I tell you, before Abraham was, I am (Jn 8:58).” In Greek, it is *ego eimi*.
  - ii. By the time of Christ, the primary language in Israel was not Hebrew, but Greek. Most Jews could not read the Old Testament, because they spoke Greek. So, seventy of the top Jewish scholars translated the Old Testament into Greek. It was called the Septuagint, which means seventy. It was translated a few hundred years before Christ was born. When Christ quoted the Old Testament, He was quoting the Septuagint.
  - iii. In Exodus 3, God appeared to Moses in the burning bush, and told Moses to deliver the Israelites out of Egypt. Moses asked, “Who are you?” Exodus 3:14 says, “God replied to Moses, ‘I AM WHO I AM.’” When the Jewish scholars translated this verse into the Greek Septuagint, they translated it *ego eimi*. When God revealed Himself to Moses, it was *ego eimi*. When

Jesus revealed Himself to the Jews, He said He was *ego eimi*. I AM. The Jews knew that Jesus was claiming to be God, because after saying this they picked up rocks to stone Him.

- b. Christ's indirect claims.
  - i. Christ claimed to be able to forgive sins. Mk 2:1-12; Lk 7:36-50
  - ii. Christ claimed that He could give eternal life. Jn 5:21
  - iii. Christ claimed the same title as God. "The first and the last." Rev 22:13; Is 44:6
  - iv. Christ claimed to be the judge of the world. God made this same claim in the Old Testament. Mt 25:31-33
- c. Christ's self-centered claims.
  - i. Jesus claimed to be greater than the temple. Mt 12:6
  - ii. He claimed to be Lord of the Sabbath. Lk 6:5
  - iii. He claimed that eternal life could only be found through belief in Him. Jn 3:16; Jn 11:5
  - iv. He went into a synagogue in Nazareth one Sabbath, stood up and read a passage from the book of Isaiah (61:1-2), and said, "Today as you listen, this Scripture has been fulfilled." Lk 4:16-21
  - v. He commanded his listeners give up everything and devote themselves wholeheartedly to following Him, no matter the cost. Lk 9:23
  - vi. He demanded that His followers love Him more than their own immediate family members. Mt 10:37-38
  - vii. He claimed to be greater than the prophet Jonah. Lk 11:31-32
  - viii. He claimed to be greater than Solomon. Lk 11:31-32
  - ix. He claimed that Law of Moses, the Prophets, and the Psalms were about him. Lk 24:27
  - x. He claimed that the Scriptures testified about him. Jn 5:39
  - xi. He claimed that Moses had written of him. Jn 5:46
  - xii. He claimed to be the bread of life. Jn 6:35
  - xiii. He claimed to be the light of the world. Jn 8:12
  - xiv. He said that Abraham rejoiced to see his day. Jn 8:56
  - xv. He claimed to be the resurrection and the life. Jn 11:25
  - xvi. He said that His desire was to draw all people to Himself. Jn 12:32
  - xvii. He claimed to be the way, the truth, and the life, and the only way to the Father. Jn 14:6
  - xviii. He invited his listeners to come to him, to take up his yoke, and learn from him, and He would give them rest. Mt 11:28-29
- d. Jesus claimed a unique relationship with God the Father:
  - i. To know Him was to know God. Jn 8:19; 14:7
  - ii. To see Him was to see God. Jn 12:45; Jn 14:7
  - iii. To believe in him was to believe in God. Jn 12:44
  - iv. To welcome Him was to welcome God. Mk 9:37
  - v. To hate Jesus was to hate God. Jn 15:23
  - vi. To dishonor Him was to dishonor God. Jn 5:23

- e. The apostles' claims.
  - i. John said of Christ, "In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God (ESV)." Jn 1:1
  - ii. Paul declared that Jesus was "God over all." Rm 9:5
  - iii. Col 1:15-17 "15 He is the image of the invisible God, the firstborn over all creation. 16 For everything was created by him, in heaven and on earth, the visible and the invisible, whether thrones or dominions or rulers or authorities—all things have been created through him and for him. 17 He is before all things, and by him all things hold together."
  - iv. Colossians 1:19 "For God was pleased to have all his fullness dwell in him."
  - v. Colossians 2:9 "For the entire fullness of God's nature dwells bodily in Christ"
  - vi. Paul referred to Jesus as "our great God and Savior." Titus 2:13
  - vii. "The Son is the radiance of God's glory and the exact expression of his nature" Heb 1:3
  - viii. Peter referred to Jesus as "our God and Savior." 2 Pet 1:1
  - ix. Peter referred to Christ's "divine power." 2 Pt 1:3

## V. CONCLUSION

- a. Why does Christ's deity matter?
  - i. If Jesus is God, then God exists. Jn 1:1
  - ii. If Jesus is God, then we know who God is, and what God is like. Col 1:15; Heb 1:3
  - iii. If Jesus is God, then the Old Testament is true, because He consistently affirmed it. Jn 5:39; Jn 5:46-47
  - iv. If Jesus is God, then the New Testament is true because it constantly affirms His divinity. Jn 1:1; Rm 9:5; Titus 2:13; 2 Pt 1:1
  - v. If Jesus is God, then there is an afterlife, and we know how to go to heaven. Jn 3:16
  - vi. If Jesus is God, then the creation account in Genesis is true, because Jesus affirmed it. Mt 19:1-5
  - vii. If Jesus is God, then we know where we came from – we were created by God. Mt 19:1-5
  - viii. If Jesus is God, then we know why we are here – to love and serve God, and to love our neighbor. Mt 22:37-40
  - ix. If Jesus is God, then there is objective morality, and it has been revealed to us in Scripture. Exodus 20; Mt 5-7
  - x. If Jesus is God, then how we live matters, and we will one day be held accountable for our actions. Mt 12:36-37
- b. Is Jesus Christ God? Yes. Colossians 2:9 "For the entire fullness of God's nature dwells bodily in Christ."
- c. Do you believe in Him? Are you walking with Him? Are you living for Him? Are you ready to meet Him face to face if you die today?