

Jesus: the God-Man

*“When Jesus came to the region of Caesarea Philippi, he asked his disciples, ‘Who do people say the Son of Man is?’ They replied, ‘Some say John the Baptist; others say Elijah; and still others, Jeremiah or one of the prophets.’ ‘But what about you?’ he asked. “Who do you say that I am?’ Simon Peter answered, ‘You are the Christ, the Son of the living God.’ Jesus replied, ‘Blessed are you, Simon son of Jonah, for this was not **revealed** to you by man, but by my Father in heaven.....and on this rock I will build my church, and the gates of hades will not overcome it.”*

Matthew 16:13-18

The Christian life is founded on the rock of revelation that Jesus Christ is the Son of God. But not everyone believes this. Christianity is a “revealed” religion. The term “revelation” describes Peter’s response in the above scripture passage. Revelation refers to God’s self disclosure to men and women. Since all of Christianity is founded on this concept of seeing and believing that Jesus is both God and man, and that he is, as scripture says, the Son of God, we would do well to explore the significance and meaning of this revelation of Christ’s identity. Is he the Son of God? Is he both God and man?

Revelation

The scripture above states that only God can make real the truth that Jesus Christ is the Savior. The word “revealed” in the above scripture is translated from a Greek word that means “the drawing back of a veil to reveal hidden things”. Revelation could be defined as knowledge that comes from outside ourselves and is beyond our own ability to discover. The only way man can know anything about God is because God first graciously chooses to reveal himself to us.

Special Revelation

Theologians generally speak of two kinds of revelation: general revelation and special revelation. The kind of revelation that Peter had in the above scripture is the kind that all true Christians also have in some form, and that is known as a special revelation. It is a clear seeing and knowing that Jesus is the Son of God and only God can reveal it to us. General revelation is different. It is something available to all and less specific. Before we look at the scriptures where Jesus reveals himself as the Son of God, let us look first at the general revelation or knowledge about God that is available to everyone.

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General Revelation

General revelation, is a knowing or seeing that is common to all men and comes in three ways. First there is the testimony to God's existence as seen throughout creation.

1. Creation

"The heavens _____ the glory of God, the _____ proclaim the work of his hands. Day after day they pour forth speech; night after night they _____."
Psalm 19:1-2

2. Conscience

Second, we are all given a conscience by God through which we make the distinctions between right and wrong. The Bible says that this general sense of right and wrong is engraved on us by God.

"Indeed, when the Gentiles, who do not have the law, do _____ things required by the law, they are a law for themselves, even though they do not have the law, since they show that the requirements of the law are _____, their consciences also bearing witness, and their thoughts now accusing, now even defending them."
Romans .2:14-15

3. Providence

Also, general revelation comes to all men through what is called God's Divine Providence - which means God's sovereign and fatherly care for all his creation. God oversees everything and provides for all that happens.

"Yet he [God] has not left himself without _____: He has shown kindness by giving you rain from heaven and crops in their seasons; he _____ you with plenty and fills your hearts with joy."
Acts 14:17

The Bible says that all men and women receive general revelation, and it is sufficient to make us aware that there is a God (Rom.1:20). Everyone can see God's handiwork in nature and is in touch with their own burdened conscience due to sin and know of God's care in their circumstances. But while general revelation is a powerful witness of God's presence and reveals something of his character, only those who see and believe (and eventually act on that belief) that Jesus Christ is the Son of God are ultimately saved.

What does it mean to believe that Jesus is the Son of God? Is Jesus God or is Jesus man? Jesus asked his disciples who the people thought he was. Peter was the first to answer that somehow Jesus was not just a man but God.

The word "mystery" refers to that 'special revelation of Christ's true identity as the God / Man.

To whom is this mystery revealed? To the needy, to the hurting, to the meek, to the hungry, to the merciful (Matthew 5:3-10) and to those who can yet trust as little children.

Memory verse:

At that time Jesus, full of joy through the Holy Spirit, said, "I praise you, Father, Lord of heaven and earth, because you have hidden these things from the wise and learned, and revealed them to little children. Yes, Father, for this was your good pleasure."

Luke 10:21

The Record of Others:

As we look at those who were closest to Jesus and what they said about him, we see that they also testified to their belief that he was God. The apostles John and Peter spent over three years at Jesus' side. They lived and ate with him. Here is what John says:

That which was from the beginning, which we have _____, which we have _____, which we have _____ and our _____ -- this we proclaim concerning the Word of life.
1 John 1:1

"But you know that he appeared so that he might take away our sins. And in Him _____."
1 John 3:5

Peter, preaching in Jerusalem to the Jews had this to say:

"Men of Israel, listen to this: Jesus of Nazareth was _____ accredited by God to you by miracles, wonders and signs, which God did among you through him, as you yourselves know.
Acts 2:22

"For you know that it was not with perishable things such as silver or gold that you were redeemed from the empty way of life handed down to you from your forefathers, but with the precious blood of Christ, a lamb _____ or _____."
1 Peter 1:19

The apostle Paul also says:

"God made him who _____ to be sin for us, so that in him we might become the righteousness of God."
2 Corinthians 5:21

The words of Paul again in 1 Timothy 3:16, probably taken from a confession or hymn common to the early church, affirm the "revelation" aspect of our faith.

*Beyond all question, the **mystery** of godliness is great: He appeared in a body, was vindicated by the Spirit, was seen by angels, was preached among the nations, was believed on in the world, was taken up in glory.*
1 Timothy 3:16

And Jesus told him that upon that revelation and confession he would build his church, his people. Those who are the people of God are those who believe that Jesus is God; or more specifically - the Son of God- meaning uniquely both God and man.

In the rest of this study we will see the scriptures that prove to us the real identity upon which our faith is founded - Jesus Christ the Son of God - or, Jesus the God-man.

The Godship of Jesus:

We find that throughout the New Testament Jesus said that he was God. Everything He did and said had its basis in his belief and assumption that He was God.

1. He forgave sins.

"When Jesus saw their faith, he said to the paralytic, 'Take heart son; your _____'."

Matthew 9:2

2. He received worship

"Then he said to Thomas, 'Put your finger here; see my hands. Reach out your hand and put it into my side. Stop doubting and believe.' Thomas said to him, 'My _____ and my _____'."
John 20:27-29 (cf Acts 14:8-18)

3. He used of himself the Old Testament Name of God.

"I tell you the truth," Jesus answered, "before Abraham was born, _____!"
John 8:58

The word for "I am" is related to the word "Yaweh" (Heb.) which is the Name God revealed to Moses in front of the burning bush as the Name by which he was to be known.

God said to Moses, "I AM WHO I AM. This is what you are to say to the Israelites: _____ has sent me to you."
Exodus 3:14

In the Gospel of John, Jesus continually used phrase "I am" in referring to attributes of himself. Below is a list of the "I Am's" used by Jesus in referring to Himself:

- John 6:35 - *"Then Jesus declared, 'I am the _____'."*
- John 8:12 - *"I am the _____. Whoever follows me will never walk in darkness, but have the light of life."*
- John 8:58 - *".....before Abraham was born, _____!"*

- John 9:5 - "While I am in the world, _____ the light of the world."
- John 11:25 - "I am the _____ . He who believes in me will live, even though he dies..."
- John 14:6 - "I am the _____ the _____ and the _____ . No one comes to the Father except through me."
- John 15:5 - "I am the _____ ; you are the branches. If a man remains in me and I in him, he will bear much fruit; apart from me you can do _____ ."

4. He completely Identified with God.

"I and the Father are _____ . John 10:30

We read in the prologue to John's gospel that John has these amazing things to say about Jesus:

In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word _____ . John 1:1

The Word became _____ and made his dwelling among us. John 1:14

Summary

We find in the narratives of the Gospels that Jesus forgave sins (which only God can do), used the all important Name of God in referring to himself, and identified himself completely with God. As one of the English greatest writers and Christian apologists, C.S. Lewis put it:

"I am trying here to prevent anyone saying the really foolish thing that people often say about him[Jesus]: 'I'm ready to accept Jesus as a great moral teacher, but I don't accept his claim to be God.' That is the one thing we must not say. A man who was merely a man and said the sort of things Jesus said would not be a great moral teacher. He would either be a lunatic - on a level with the man who says he is a poached egg - or else he would be the devil of hell. You must make your choice. Either this man was, and is, the Son of God; or else a madman or something worse. You can shut him up for a fool, you can spit at him and kill him as a demon; or you can fall at his feet and call him Lord and God. But let us not come with any patronizing nonsense about his being a great human teacher. He has not left that open to us. He did not intend to."

Jesus didn't purport himself only as a good teacher but acted and claimed that he was equal with God.

The Manhood of Jesus:

As we look further through the record of the Gospels, we find that Jesus not only acted like and claimed to be equal with God, but acted like and claimed the same feelings as a man of the flesh. Many times we see the very human responses of Jesus.

1. Exasperation

"O _____ generation,' Jesus replied, 'how long shall I stay with you? How long shall I _____ ?'" Mark 9:19

2. Fatigue

"Jacob's well was there, and Jesus, _____ as he was from the journey, sat down by the well." John 4:6

3. Hungry

"While Jesus was having dinner at Levi's house, many tax collectors and 'sinners' were eating with him and his disciples, for there were many who followed him. When the teachers of the law who were Pharisees saw him eating with the 'sinners' and tax collectors, they asked his disciples: 'Why does he eat with tax collectors and 'sinners'?' " Mark 2:15-16

"The next day as they were leaving Bethany, Jesus was _____ ." Mark 11:12

4. Angry

"On reaching Jerusalem, Jesus entered the temple area and began _____ those who were buying and selling there. He overturned the tables of the money changers and the benches of those selling doves." Mark 11:15

5. Need for Solitude

"At daybreak Jesus went out to a _____ . The people were looking for him and when they came to where he was, they tried to keep him from leaving them." Luke 4:4