

Who is Jesus?

What the Atheist Say

- * Jesus is a myth
- * Jesus was just a good teacher

“Lycurgus, Numa, Moses, Jesus Christ, Mohammed, all these great rogues, all these great thought-tyrants, knew how to associate the divinities they fabricated with their own boundless ambition.” Marquis de Sade

“Jesus died too soon. if he had lived to my age he would have repudiated his doctrine.” Friedrich Nietzsche

Non-Biblical Writers

- * Thallus

- * Julius Africanus (221AD) quotes Thallus

- * *Previously tried to explain away the darkness that occurred at the point of Jesus' crucifixion: "Thallus in the third book of his histories, explains away this darkness as an eclipse of the sun..." (52AD)*

- * Phlegon (140AD)

- * Africanus mentions Phlegon who also mentions the darkness surrounding the crucifixion in an effort to explain it, but even more interestingly, he mentions Jesus' ability to foresee the future in describing the life of our Savior.

Non-Biblical Writers

- * Mara Bar-Serapion (70AD)
 - * *Compares the life and persecution of Jesus with that of other philosophers who were persecuted for their ideas. Mara Bar-Serapion refers to Jesus as the “Wise King”.*
- * Josephus (93AD)
 - * *His history includes three passages about Christians, one in which he describes the death of John the Baptist, one in which he mentions the execution of James and describes him as the brother of Jesus the Christ, “worker of amazing deeds”, crucified by Pilate, followers were called Christians, and a final passage which describes Jesus as a wise man and the messiah*

Non-Biblical Writers

Jewish Talmud (400-700AD)

“Jesus practiced magic and led Israel astray” (b. Sanhedrin 43a; cf. t. Shabbat 11.15; b. Shabbat 104b)

*“It was taught: On the day before the Passover they hanged Jesus. A herald went before him for forty days (proclaiming), “He will be stoned, because **he practiced magic** and enticed Israel to go astray. Let anyone who knows anything in his favor come forward and plead for him.” But nothing was found in his favor, and **they hanged him on the day before the Passover.** (b. Sanhedrin 43a)*

Non-Biblical Writers

The Toledot Yeshu (1000AD) – hostile jewish witness

- * *Yeshu (Jesus) proclaimed, "I am the Messiah"*
- * *Healed a lame man*
- * *Brought a dead body back to life*
- * *Yeshu was put to death on the sixth hour on the eve of the Passover*
- * *Followers said he was the Messiah and was not found in the grave*
 - * *Claimed gardener took the body*

Non-Biblical Writers

Cornelius Tacitus (116AD)

Pliny the Younger (112AD)

Hadrian (130AD)

Lucian of Samosata (125-180AD)

Jesus' two natures

Jesus was both fully God and fully human.

Jesus claimed to be God many times for throughout his ministry, which is why the Jews tried to stone him and ultimately killed him.

The Lie

Skeptics argue that Jesus never claimed to be God

If Jesus was a prophet, He would say “the Lord says ...”

- * Is 10:24, Jer 6:6, Ez 5:5, Amos 2:6, Mic 3:5, Hag 1:2, Zec 1:16
- * Jesus did not use this language Matt 5:18, 11:11, Mark 11:23, 14:9, John 5:25
 - * He did not speak for God, He spoke as God

Jesus used God’s own name (“I Am”)

- * Ex 3:14 – “I AM has sent me to you”; this is God’s exclusive name
- * John 8:49-58 “before Abraham was born, I am!”
- * John 8:59 – Jewish leaders understood what He said

The Lie

Skeptics argue that Jesus never claimed to be God

Jesus said He and the Father were not from this world

- * John 8:23-24, John 18:36-37

Jesus talked as an equal with God

- * Luke 12:8-9, Matt 13:41 - Angels belonged to God
- * John 14:6-9, John 14:23 – See Jesus you see God

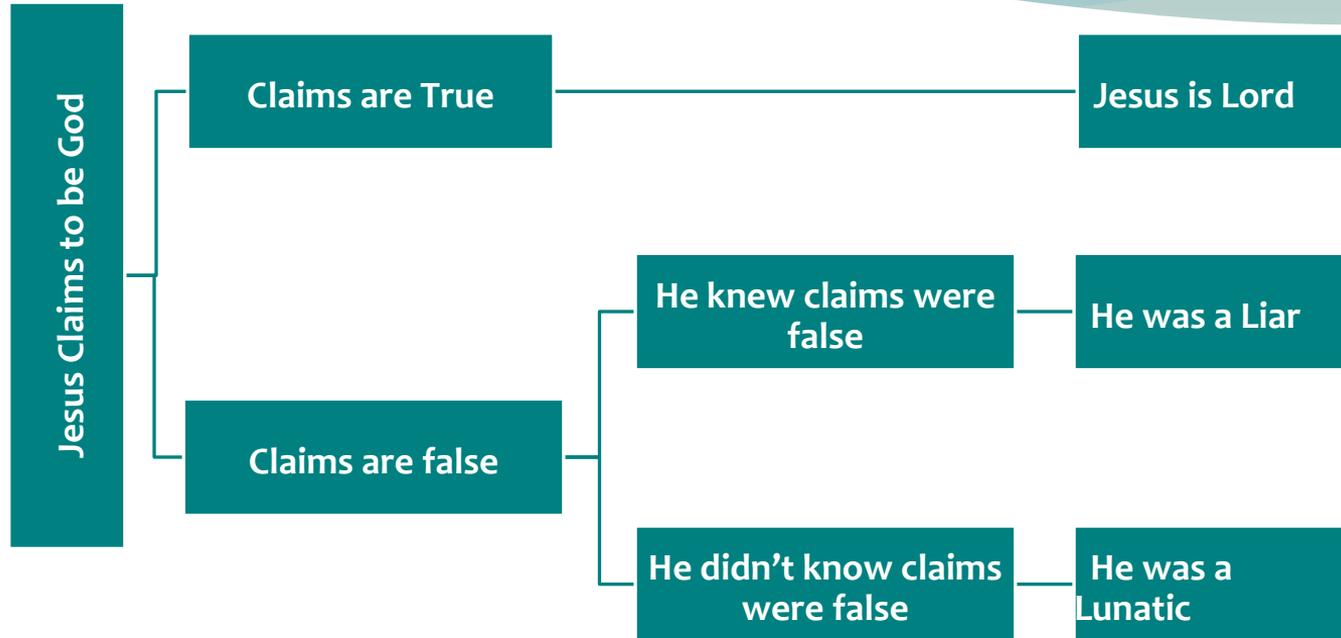
Jesus said that He and God were one

- * John 10:25-29, John 10:31-33

Is Jesus just a good teacher?

- * Can a good teacher teach a lie? He claimed to be God
- * He can't be just a good teacher, He must be crazy or whom He claimed to be

Liar, Lunatic, or Son of God



Liar, Lunatic, or Son of God

Liar

“How, in the name of logic, common sense, and experience, could an impostor – that is a deceitful, selfish, depraved man – have invented, and consistently maintained from the beginning to end, the purest and noblest character known in history with the most perfect air of truth and reality?”

Philip Schaff, *The Person of Christ*, New York: American Tract Society, 1913, pages 94, 95

Liar, Lunatic, or Son of God

Lunatic

“For nearly two thousand years the Christian world has been holding in its hands the complete answer to its [humankind’s] restless and fruitless yearnings. Here ... rests the *blueprint for successful human life with optimism, mental health, and contentment.*”

J.T. Fisher and L.S. Hawley, *A Few Buttons Missing*, Philadelphia, Penn.: Lippincott, 1951, page 273

Son of God

Confession of Martha; John 11:27

Confession of Peter; Matt 16:15-16

Liar, Lunatic, or Son of God

“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 up with any patronizing nonsense about His being a great human teacher. He has not left that open to us. He did not intend to.

(C.S. Lewis, Mere Christianity. New York: Macmillan, 1952, p. 40, 41)

Prophecies are our Evidence

- * Messiah would come from the tribe of Judah (Genesis 49:10)
 - * Luke 3:23-24, Matt 1:1-16
- * Messiah will appear after the Jews return to Israel (Jer 23:3-6)
 - * Prophecy issued 626 – 586 BC
 - * Jesus appears 33 AD
 - * Temple is destroyed in 70 AD, 135 AD Israel is scattered by Romans
- * Messiah would be born in Bethlehem (Micah 5:2)
- * Matthew 2:1 (Jesus born in Bethlehem and from the bloodline of King David)

Prophecies are our Evidence

- * Messiah would be preceded by a Messenger (Is 40:3)
 - * Matt 3:1-2
- * Messiah would enter Jerusalem on a Donkey (Zech 9:9)
 - * Luke 19:35-37
- * Messiah would suffer and be rejected (Is 53:3)
- * Messiah betrayed for 30 pieces of silver (Zech 11:12-13)
 - * Matt 27:5-27
- * Messiah would be wounded, whipped, and crucified (Is 53:5)
- * Messiah would suffer crucifixion (Ps 22)

Prophecies are our Evidence

- * Messiah crucified with criminals (Is 53:12)
- * Messiah would be buried in a rich man's tomb (Is 53:9)
- * **What are the Odds?**
- * Peter Stoner (Science Speaks, Moody Press, 1963)
 - * “we find that the chance that any man might have lived down to the present time and fulfilled all eight prophecies is 1 in 10^{17} power”
 - * Same odds as spreading out 100,000,000,000,000,000 silver dollars (one marked) over Texas and having a blindfolded man picking the marked silver dollar
 - * 48 fulfilled prophecies would be 1 in 10^{157} power

Miracles are our Evidence

<i>He turned water into wine (John 2:1-11)</i>	<i>He raised the widow's son at Nain (Luke 7:11-18)</i>
<i>He healed a nobleman's son (John 4:46-54)</i>	<i>He miraculously fed four thousand (Matt 15:32)</i>
<i>He healed an impotent man at Bethsaida (John 5:1-9)</i>	<i>He healed a demoniac in a synagogue at Capernaum (Mark 1:23; Luke 4:33)</i>
<i>He healed a man who was born blind (John 9:1-7)</i>	<i>He was resurrected (John 21:1-14)</i>
<i>He raised Lazarus from the dead (John 11:38-44)</i>	<i>He walked on water (Matt 14:25; Mark 6:48; John 6:15)</i>
<i>He cured two blind men (Matt 9:27-31)</i>	<i>He healed a deaf and dumb man (Mark 7:31-37)</i>
<i>He healed the blind man of Bethsaida (Mark 8:22-26)</i>	<i>He produced the catch of fishes (John 21:1-14)</i>

Miracles are our Evidence Outside Bible

Celsus (175AD) This hostile pagan account provides historical facts
“Jesus had come from a village in Judea, and was the *son of a poor Jewess* who gained her living by the work of her own hands. His mother had been turned out of doors by her *husband, who was a carpenter by trade*, on being convicted of adultery [with a soldier named Panthéra (i.32)]. Being thus driven away by her husband, and wandering about in disgrace, *she gave birth to Jesus*, a bastard. Jesus, on account of his poverty, was hired out to go to Egypt. While there he acquired certain (magical) powers which Egyptians pride themselves on possessing. *He returned home highly elated at possessing these powers, and on the strength of them gave himself out to be a god.”*

What do other Religions say about Jesus?

Islam

- * "Whoever believes that there is none worthy of worship but God, alone without partner, that Muhammad is His messenger, that *Jesus is the servant and messenger of God, His word which He bestowed on Mary and a spirit proceeding from Him, and that Paradise and Hell are true, shall be received by God into Heaven.*" (A Hadith from the collections of al Bukhari)
- * "And, in their footsteps, we sent *Jesus, the son of Mary, confirming the law that had come before him. We sent him the gospel.* Therein was guidance and light, and confirmation of the law that had come before him. A guidance and an admonition to those who fear God." (S-5-46)
- * Muslims accept that Jesus at least was a true prophet but not God.

What do other Religions say about Jesus?

Baha'i

- * *“The deepest wisdom which the sages have uttered, the profoundest learning which any mind hath unfolded, the arts which the ablest hands have produced, the influence exerted by the most potent of rulers, are but manifestations of the quickening power released by His transcendent, His all-pervasive, and resplendent Spirit. We testify that when He came into the world, He shed the splendor of His glory upon all created things. Through Him the leper recovered from the leprosy of perversity and ignorance. **Through Him, the unchaste and wayward were healed. Through His power, born of Almighty God, the eyes of the blind were opened, and the soul of the sinner sanctified.** (Baha'u'llah, Gleanings from the Writings of Baha'u'llah, p. 85)*
- * Jesus, while NOT God, was one of many manifestations of God (including Abraham, Moses, Buddha, Zoroaster and Muhammad).

What do other Religions say about Jesus?

Hinduism

- * *Jesus was a Holy Man (Hindu Saint on the basis of his life & teaching)*
- * *Jesus was a Wise Teacher*
 - * *Gandhi saw Jesus as a symbol of superior ethics and revered His teaching*
- * *Jesus is a 'God'*
 - * *He was divine in his modeling (included in the list of deities)*
 - * *Jesus is not the only way to God*
 - * *Some see Jesus as a God-man (Rama, Krishna, Buddha)*

What do other Religions say about Jesus?

Buddhism

- * *Based on teachings of Siddhartha Gautama (563-483BC); Buddha*
- * *No singular unified view about Jesus*
- * *Jesus was an Enlightened Man*
- * *Jesus was a Wise Teacher but not divine*
- * *Jesus was a Holy Man*

Top 10 Reasons that Jesus claimed to be God

1. “Before Abraham was, I am” - John 8:58 referring to Exodus 3
2. He claimed to be equal to God by applying God’s OT attributes to himself (the Shepherd, the First and Last, the Judge, the Light, the Bridegroom, the Savior)
3. He told people that their sins were forgiven - Mark 2:5-7
4. Jesus claimed to be one with God the Father - John 10
5. Jesus claimed to be the Messiah - Isaiah 9:6, John 4:25-26
6. Jesus claimed to be due honor reserved only to the Father - John 5:19-23
7. Jesus claimed to be worthy of worship and accepted it - Matt 20:20-28
8. Jesus claimed to have authority equal to God - Matthew 28:18
9. Jesus claimed to be the object of prayer - John 14:9-14
10. Jesus claimed to be without sin - John 8:46

Jesus is who He said He is

- * *Early non-biblical writers verify Jesus was a historical character*
- * *Jesus claimed to be God*
- * Jesus fulfilled old testament prophecies
- * Jesus showed that he could do miracles
- * Other religions hold Jesus in high esteem
- * Jesus rose from the dead

Jesus' demands a decision from us;

Trust the evidence and follow him, Refuse evidence and follow ourselves