

# Core Beliefs

## Jesus is Divine



In years past, it was common for unbelievers to question whether Jesus was a historical figure. Now, even secular scholars are in almost unanimous agreement that a Jewish rabbi named Jesus actually lived and taught in Israel in the early first century. The only question left to consider is whether this Jesus was just a wise teacher, or as Christians claim, he was God’s divine son in human form.

### What Does Jesus Claim for Himself

Some suggest that Jesus never claimed to be deity — that his followers made that up after the fact. It is true that Jesus often guarded his identity from those in power. But as he drew near the end of his life, he made it clear that he was not just a human teacher. He confirmed that he was the full nature of God (Colossians 2:9).

When Jesus called God his Father, the religious leaders understood that he was “making himself equal to God” (John 5:16-18). Later, some of them even tried to kill Jesus because he referred to himself using a title reserved for God (John 8:58/Exodus 3:14). He claimed to forgive sins as only God could do (Mark 2:5-7) and talked about sitting on a throne in heaven (Matthew 25:31). Even though he guarded his true identity at times, Jesus clearly believed and made known to others that he was more than human— he was divine.

### What Do The Bible Writers Believe?

Some argue that the claim that Jesus was God was a legend that developed decades or centuries after he lived. Just like the legends of Paul Bunyan or Johnny Appleseed, critics claim that the story of Jesus’ divine nature is more legend than truth.

But from the earliest years of the Christian movement, believers claimed that Jesus was God’s divine son. We can see that in the earlier writings of the New Testament. Sixty years after Jesus, John would refer to him as “the Word” and write, “In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God and the Word was God” (John 1:1). Matthew wrote his gospel account about thirty years after Jesus and says the angels announcing his birth said that he would be called Immanuel, which means “God with us” (Matthew 1:23).

But the earliest evidence that Jesus was believed to be the son of God is found in Paul’s writings. In his letter to the church in Philippi, he recites a well known hymn dating back to within a few years after Jesus. That ancient hymn says that Jesus was “in very nature God” and that after his resurrection he was “exalted to the highest place” and that “every knee would bow down in heaven and on the earth and under the earth and every tongue acknowledge that Jesus Christ is Lord” (Philippians 1:1-11).

There is no question that from its origins, the Christian movement—its writers and followers—believed that Jesus was more than a wise rabbi—they believed that he was God’s divine son in human form.

## The Evidence In Jesus’ Life

It’s one thing to claim to be God. It’s another thing to prove it. Jesus not only claimed to be deity, he demonstrated the power and character of God by what he did and said.

He taught like no one else. At the end of the Sermon on the Mount, the crowds were amazed because he taught as someone “who had authority” and not like the other teachers they heard (Matthew 7:28-29). Those who witnessed his baptism saw God’s Spirit descend on him like a dove and heard a voice from heaven proclaim, “This is my Son whom I love” (Matthew 13:17). He performed miracles that astounded people. Blind people were given their sight, lame people could instantly walk. He took a small boy’s lunch and miraculously used it to feed thousands of people. He stopped a raging storm with a command. And those who witnessed this great feat said, “What kind of man is this? Even the winds and the waves obey him” (Matthew 8:27).

When people spent time with Jesus—listening to him teach, witnessing his miracles, seeing his display of compassion and mercy—they were convinced that he was divine. Even Nicodemus, a religious expert in Israel said to Jesus, “Rabbi, we know that you are a teacher who has come from God. For no one could perform the signs you are doing if God were not with him” (John 3:2)”

## The Greatest Proof

The greatest proof of Jesus’ divine nature is seen in his power over death. When he showed up at the wake for his friend Lazarus, Mary and Martha cried out, “If only you had been here earlier”. But Jesus told them, “I am the resurrection and the life” and although Lazarus had been dead for several days, Jesus brought him back to life with a simple command (John 11).

But Jesus revealed the greatest proof of his divinity when he came back to life after his own death. The Jewish leaders sought to end this rebellious movement by killing Jesus. Little did they know that he held the power over death. Later, Paul would write that Jesus, “was declared Son of God in power according to the Holy Spirit by the resurrection from the dead of Jesus Christ our Lord” (Romans 1:4).

If Jesus truly did come back to life again, as he told his followers that he would, then we must acknowledge that this simple looking rabbi was more than human—that he was the divine son of God come to reveal the Creator to us.

**VIDEO:** [Five Reasons Jesus Is Divine](#)