

Whose Son Is Christ?

Scripture: Matthew 22:41–46

Code: 2359

INTRODUCTION

A. The Descriptions of Jesus Christ

The most important of all questions is, "Who is Jesus Christ?" When it comes to opinions about Jesus Christ, the world has never lacked for definitions.

1. By ancient Jewish leaders

According to the Talmud the Jewish leaders said Jesus practiced magic and led Israel astray ([Sanhedrin 43a](#)). That comment was written somewhere between A.D. 100-200. There have been many who have taken a strong, negative view of Jesus. The Jewish leaders of Jesus' own day said He performed miracles by the devil himself (Matt. 12:24).

2. By Julian the Apostate

Julian the Apostate, Roman Emperor from A.D. 361 to 363, said, "Jesus has now been celebrated about three hundred years; having done nothing in His lifetime worthy of fame, unless any one thinks it a very great work to heal lame and blind people and exercise demoniacs in the villages of Bethsaida and Bethany" (quoted by Cyril, fifth century bishop of Alexandria, in his [Contra Julian](#), lib. vi., p. 191).

3. By Rousseau

Humanity has generally been condescending and complimentary toward Jesus. French philosopher Rousseau said, "When Plato describes his imaginary righteous man loaded with all the punishments of guilt, yet meriting the highest rewards of virtue, he describes exactly the character of Jesus Christ the life and death of Jesus are those of a God" ([Oeuvres completes](#) [Paris, 1839], tome iii, pp. 365-67).

4. By Ralph Waldo Emerson

Although not a believer, this famous poet said that Jesus is the most perfect of all the men that have yet appeared on the earth ([The Collected Works of Ralph Waldo Emerson](#), vol. 1 [Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard, 1971], p. 80f).

5. By Napoleon

Napoleon said, "I know men, and I tell you that Jesus Christ was not a man" ([Law, Love and Religion of Napoleon Bonaparte in His Own Words](#), Hiram E. Casey, ed. [N.Y.: Carlton Press, 1961], p. 64).

6. By John Stuart Mill

This English philosopher and economist said Jesus was "the pattern of perfection for humanity" ("Theism" in Three Essays on Religion [Holt, p. 253]).

7. By Lecky

This Irish historian and essayist said Jesus was "the highest pattern of virtue" (History of European Morals from Augustus to Charlemagne [N.Y.: D. Appleton and Co., 1903], p. 8).

8. By Renan

This French philologist and historian said Jesus "will never be surpassed" (The Life of Jesus [N.Y.; 1864], p. 376).

9. By Theodore Parker

This American Unitarian clergyman called Jesus the youth with God in His heart (A Discourse of Matters Pertaining to Religion [Boston: Rufus Leighton Jr., 1859], p. 281).

10. By David Strauss

This German theologian and philosopher, a staunch critic of Christianity, said Jesus is "the highest model of religion within the reach of [human] thought" (Vergangliches und Bleibendes im Christenthum [Freihafen: 1838], p. 47).

11. By H.G. Wells

The famous English novelist wrote, "When I was asked which single individual has left the most permanent impression on the world, the manner of the questioner almost carried the implication that it was Jesus of Nazareth. I agreed.... Jesus stands first" ("The Three Greatest Men in History," Reader's Digest [May, 1935], pp. 12-14).

Even many who don't believe in Jesus Christ have stated that He was the best of men.

B. The Denials of Jesus Christ

Underneath those complimentary descriptions of Jesus Christ is an incipient denial that He was nothing more than the best man among men. Christianity has always found its most violent detractors and aggressive attackers at its doctrinal core: the deity of Jesus Christ. Christ's deity is attacked more than any other Christian doctrine. The major emphasis in denying the deity of Jesus Christ is that He was a man and nothing more.

1. By the Christadelphians

Some time ago I read an advertisement that said, "Sunday at 7 p.m., the Christadelphians invite you to a Bible address on the subject, 'Jesus is not God,' given by Arthur Woods, Bible teacher/lecturer."

2. By Liberal Protestantism

On January 21, 1984, the Seattle Times ran a feature article entitled, "Jesus as Man." It says, "The Rev. David Aasen, pastor of the First United Methodist Church ... has swung vigorously into a sermon series emphasizing Jesus Christ as man, not God." He said the reason there is any controversy at all concerning this issue is "there's always a bunch of people who say Jesus is God." He said further that it is important "for us to have as proper a perspective of Jesus as we can ... to know Jesus as he really is and not some, ah, fantasy." His associate, Rev. Gary Starkey, said, "Jesus is one of us." The article even suggests that Jesus was merely like a Mother Teresa or Caesar Chavez.

3. By the Anthroposophical Society

The Anthroposophical Society, which was founded by Rudolph Steiner, teaches that Jesus was an ordinary man who at thirty received the Christ's essence.

4. By Islam

Muslim theology teaches that Jesus was a prophet but not the equal of Mohammed.

5. By Christian Science

Christian Science teaches that Jesus was a mere man who lived out a divine ideal, but that His blood cleanses nothing.

6. By The Church of the Living Word

The Church of the Living Word's leader, John Robert Stevens, considers himself to be God's chief apostle and intercessor.

7. By The Church Universal and Triumphant

Elizabeth Claire Prophet, their leader, says that Jesus was a man with Christ consciousness, but only one of many men who have achieved that level.

8. By Freemasonry

Hertel's Bible

, the Masons' edition of the Bible, says, "We tell the sincere Christian that Jesus of Nazareth was but a man like us" (p. 9).

9. By the Hare Krishnas

Devotees of Hare Krishna believe that Jesus is just another guru.

10. By the I Am (Ascended Masters) movement

This group believes Jesus is an ascended master.

11. By the Jehovah's Witnesses

The Jehovah's Witnesses teach that Jesus Christ is the created being Michael.

12. By the Mormons

The Mormons believe Jesus is the spirit brother of Lucifer.

13. By Rosicrucianism

The Rosicrucian religion identifies Jesus Christ as a reincarnate cosmic man.

14. By Scientology

This group teaches that Christ achieved a clear state (freedom from problems or difficulties--no neuroses or illnesses), but not the highest state of a "Thetan" (an immortal spirit).

15. By The Local Church

The Local Church, led by Witness Lee, says that Christ was neither God nor man, but a mixture of the two.

16. By The Unification Church

Sun Myung Moon believes Christ must achieve perfection by marrying and having perfect babies.

17. By The Way International

This group, led by Victor Paul Weirwille, denies that Jesus Christ is God.

18. By the Unitarians

The Unitarians teach that Christ was only a man.

Those are but a few of the myriad of attacks on Christ's deity--the doctrine where the main battle lines are drawn for the Christian faith. Misrepresentations and misconceptions are not new to Christianity. Matthew 22:41-46 describes another group of people who denied the deity of Jesus Christ. The Jewish leaders believed the Messiah would be a military leader and certainly not God in human flesh. Jesus now corrects that serious error.

LESSON

I. THE INCISIVE QUESTION (vv. 41-42a)

"While the Pharisees were gathered together, Jesus asked them, saying, What think ye of Christ? Whose son is he?"

A. The Tables Are Turned (v. 41a)

"While the Pharisees were gathered together."

The Pharisees and Herodians had asked Jesus a question and He beautifully answered them (vv. 15-22). The Sadducees came and asked Him another question, and He answered that (vv. 23-33). The Pharisees regrouped and came with yet another question (vv. 34-40). Although Jesus has answered all His critics, the Pharisees were still gathered together in a last-ditch effort to discredit Him. The problem was they had no more questions to ask. They had no more weapons left because their arsenal was depleted. Now Jesus turns the tables on the Pharisees and asks them a question. His confrontation is two-fold.

1. The indictment

Jesus' clear proclamation of who He is an indictment of their ignorance. They assumed the Messiah would be only a man. Jesus proves from their own Scriptures that the Messiah is also God. The Jewish leaders had asked Jesus by whose authority He taught (Matt. 21:23). In Matthew 22:41-46, He answers their question. Jesus' authority is His own because He is God.

2. The invitation

Jesus here also extends an invitation to some of the Pharisees because not all of them were as rigid in their rejection of Him (cf. Mark 12:34). There must have been some who were close to salvation. Further information about the deity of Christ could bring them into the kingdom.

B. The Question Is Asked (vv. 41b-42a)

"Jesus asked them, saying, What think ye of Christ? Whose son is he?"

1. The indirectness

Jesus asked the Pharisees, "What is your opinion of the Christ?" He did not ask about Himself. That would have been too direct. Christos is a New Testament term for the Old Testament term "Messiah." Jesus wanted to know whose son they thought the Messiah was.

2. The importance

That question must have appeared as a simple question to these learned Jewish leaders, but only because they didn't know the full answer. Since they never understood the fullness of what the Messiah's role would be, they never understood His true identity. They thought the Messiah's role was merely political. Jesus wanted to take them to a higher understanding.

II. THE INADEQUATE ANSWER (v. 42b)

"They say unto him, The Son of David."

A. The Scribal Teaching

The Pharisees hurried to show Jesus their knowledge but instead showed their ignorance. Any Jewish person would have given the same reply as the Pharisees because that was the standard scribal teaching concerning the Messiah (cf. Mark 12:35). The scribes got their information from the Old Testament.

1. The Old Testament

a

) 2 Samuel 7:12-13--The Lord said to David, "When thy days be fulfilled, and thou shalt sleep with thy fathers, I will set up thy seed after thee, which shall proceed out of thine own body, and I will establish his Kingdom. He shall build an house for my name, and I will establish the throne of his Kingdom forever." That could not refer to King Solomon because his kingdom didn't last forever. The prophecy was saying that from the seed of David would come one who would have an eternal Kingdom. From the time of prophecy onward, the Jewish people referred to this particular Son of David as the Messiah, which means "the anointed one."

b) Psalm 89:3-4, 20-21, 24, 34-37--The psalmist said, "I have made a covenant with my chosen, I have sworn unto David, my servant: Thy seed will I establish forever, and build up thy throne to all generations I have found David, my servant; with my holy oil have I anointed him, with whom my hand shall be established; mine arm also shall strengthen him.... my faithfulness and my mercy shall be with him; and in my name shall his horn be exalted.... My covenant will I not break, nor will I alter the thing that is gone out of my lips. Once have I sworn by my holiness that I will not lie unto David. His seed shall endure forever, and his throne as the sun before me. It shall be established forever like the moon, and as a faithful witness in heaven." God promised that David's Son, the anointed one, would reign in an eternal kingdom.

c) Amos 9:11--The Lord said, "In that day will I raise up the tabernacle of David that is fallen, and close up the breaches of it; and I will raise up his ruins, and I will build it as in the days of old."

d

) Micah 5:2--Micah said, "Thou, Bethlehem Ephrathah, though thou be little among the thousands of Judah, yet out of thee shall he come forth unto me that is to be ruler in Israel, whose goings forth have been from of old, from everlasting."

e) Ezekiel 37:24-27--As Ezekiel looked to the millennial Kingdom he said, "David, my servant, shall be king over them, and they all shall have one shepherd; they shall also walk in mine ordinances, and observe my statutes, and do them. And they shall dwell in the land that I have given unto Jacob my servant, in which your fathers have dwelt; and they shall dwell in it, even they, and their children, and their children's children forever; and my servant, David, shall be their prince forever. Moreover, I will make a covenant of peace with them; it shall be an everlasting covenant with them; and I will place them, and multiply them, and will set my sanctuary in the midst of them for evermore. My tabernacle also shall be with them; yea, I will be their God, and they shall be my people."

Beginning in the millennial Kingdom and stretching into eternity, David's greater Son--the Lord Jesus Christ Himself--will rule an everlasting Kingdom. The Jewish leaders knew that the Messiah was to

be of the seed of David.

2. The New Testament

a

) Matthew 9:27--Two blind men cried out to Jesus, "Thou Son of David, have mercy on us."

b

) Matthew 12:23--When Jesus healed a demoniac, all the people said, "Is not this the son of David?"

c

) Matthew 15:22--A woman from Canaan cried out to Jesus, saying, "Have mercy on me, O Lord, thou Son of David."

d

) Matthew 20:30--Two more blind men said, "Have mercy on us, O Lord, thou Son of David."

e

) Matthew 21:9--The multitudes said, "Hosanna to the Son of David! Blessed is he that cometh in the name of the Lord!"

f) Matthew 21:15--When Jesus cleansed the Temple, the children shouted, "Hosanna to the Son of David!"

B. The Davidic Tracing

1. The pattern

Since everyone knew the Messiah would come from the lineage of David, Matthew went into great detail to present the genealogy of Jesus Christ. He began his gospel by saying, "The book of the genealogy of Jesus Christ, the son of David, the son of Abraham." He then traces Christ's genealogy all the way down to Joseph. Luke followed the same pattern although he traced the Messiah through the line of Mary (cf. 1:27, 32-33). Jesus Christ was indeed a son of David because both his father and mother were in the Davidic family.

2. The problem

If Jesus had not been in the Davidic line, you can be sure that the Pharisees would have made it a major issue. They would have disqualified Jesus instantly from any claim of being the Messiah. They kept Temple records of every Jewish person's genealogy, and therefore would have known if Jesus did not come from David's line. Those records were kept until the destruction of the Temple in A.D.

70. Jewish people today no longer know what tribe they come from because the records have all been lost. However no Jewish person in Jesus' time could hold any civic office unless their genealogy was known. The priests would never marry someone whose genealogy they did not know. That the Pharisees never questioned Jesus' heritage indicates He was from the line of David. He was, therefore, humanly qualified to be the king of Israel. Had the monarchy still existed, He would have been king.

C. The Partial Truth

As right as the Pharisees' answer was, it was still only partially true. In answering Jesus' question, the Pharisees may have been in effect saying, "Why are you letting people call you the Son of David? That Messianic title is too great to refer to you." Jesus responds by saying, "No, that Messianic title is actually too small a title for Me. David had many descendants but I am the greatest of those." However the question remained in the minds of the Pharisees how Jesus could be greater than all of David's descendants, including the great King Solomon and the prophet Hezekiah. They thought the Messiah would be someone far more impressive than Jesus of Nazareth.

III. THE INFINITE REALITY (vv. 43-45)

"He saith unto them, How, then, doth David, in the Spirit, call him Lord, saying, The Lord said unto my Lord, Sit thou on my right hand, till I make thine enemies thy footstool? If David, then, call him Lord, how is he his son?"

The Lord responds to the Pharisees' inadequate answer by presenting them with a marvelous truth. It is a divine exposition of Psalm 110:1 by the Lord Himself!

A. The Significance (v. 43)

"He saith unto them, How, then, doth David, in the Spirit, call him Lord"

Jesus responds to the Pharisees by first saying that David called the Messiah "Lord." The Greek word for "Lord" is kurios and is a common word in the New Testament. It is most often used for describing the deity of Jesus Christ. The Hebrew word for "Lord" in the Old Testament is adonai, a title for God. Note the following examples:

1. Genesis 15:1-2--"The word of the Lord came unto Abram in a vision, saying, Fear not, Abram: I am thy shield, and thy exceedingly great reward. And Abram said, Lord God."
2. Deuteronomy 10:17--Moses said to the Israelites, "The Lord your God is God of gods, and Lord of lords."
3. Psalm 35:23--David said to God, "Stir up thyself, and awake to my right, even unto my cause, my God and my Lord."
4. Psalm 38:15--David said, "In thee, O Lord, do I hope; thou wilt hear, O Lord, my God."

5. Malachi 1:6--The Lord said, "A son honoreth his father, and a servant his master; if, then, I be a father, where is mine honor? And if I be a master, where is my fear? saith the Lord of hosts unto you."

Jesus asked the Pharisees a very important question: "If the Messiah was only David's human son, how is it that David called Him Lord, a term that refers to God"?

B. The Spirit (v. 43b)

"How, then, doth David, in the Spirit, call him Lord"

The Pharisees could have thought King David made a mistake about calling the Messiah, Lord. Maybe they thought David was giving only his own opinion or that this wasn't even David speaking at all. However Jesus made the Pharisees absolutely certain by stating that David was "in the Spirit" when he called the Messiah Lord.

The phrase "in the Spirit" refers to being under the control of the Holy Spirit (e.g., Rev. 1:10; 4:2). There is no doubt Jesus was referring to the Holy Spirit because Mark's gospel gives Jesus' entire statement: "David himself said, by the Holy Spirit, The Lord said to my Lord" (Mark 12:36). Jesus was not speaking of David's human spirit, but about the Holy Spirit. King David was under divine inspiration when he called the Messiah adonai, thus calling Him God.

C. The Scripture (v. 44)

"The Lord said unto my Lord, Sit thou on my right hand, till I make thine enemies thy footstool?"

In verse 44 Jesus cites the exact statement of David from Psalm 110:1: "The Lord [elohim] said unto my Lord [adonai]." There you have two Lords speaking to each other.

1. The intent (v. 44a)

"The Lord said unto my Lord"

Jesus used Psalm 110:1 for many reasons, but chiefly because all Jewish people believed it was a Messianic psalm. They didn't understand the full implications of the first verse but nevertheless believed it to be Messianic. Psalm 110 is the most frequently quoted psalm in the New Testament. It is quoted by Peter (Acts 2:34-35), Paul (1 Cor. 15:25), and the writer of Hebrews (1:13; 10:13). It is quoted in the gospels of Matthew, Mark, and Luke. In all three gospels Jesus attributed it to David.

a

) Psalm 110 is Messianic

The Lord Jesus Himself affirmed the messianic character of Psalm 110.

b

) Psalm 110 is authored by David

Although you don't see David's name in Psalm 110, Jesus knew David wrote it. It was traditionally ascribed to David by the Jews and Jesus confirmed that tradition.

c) Psalm 110 affirms the deity of Messiah

The main reason Jesus used Psalm 110 was to affirm the deity of the Messiah. The intent of Matthew 22:41-46 was to affirm to the Pharisees and to the world that the Messiah--Jesus Himself--is God incarnate and affirmed as such by King David.

The Denial of the Critics

I was amazed to find while reading commentaries dealing with Matthew 22:41-46 that many deny the messianic and prophetic character of Psalm 110. They don't believe the Bible is a supernatural book and therefore assume it can't predict the future, looking at it only as an historical document.

Some scholars contend that David's language could not have been as developed as it is in Psalm 110, saying the rich expressions in Psalm 110 would require it to have been written much later than David's time period. Another reason they cite is that the priest/king relationship in the psalm (cf. Ps. 110:4) would have been totally unfamiliar to David. Not necessarily, however. Priests, kings, and rich literary expressions existed at and before David's time.

We know David wrote Psalm 110 under the inspiration of the Holy Spirit because Jesus Himself said so. So when critics deny the messianic and prophetic character of Psalm 110, they are denying the deity of Jesus Christ or calling Him a liar. To do that is to ignore the evidence of who He really is. I have more reason to trust Jesus Christ than I do any critic.

2. The rank (v. 44b)

"Sit thou on my right hand, till I make thine enemies thy footstool?"

God the Father has given the Messiah a position that brings Him in a co-equal place of power and authority with Himself. God Himself declares the Messiah's deity. Hebrews 1:3 declares that Jesus, "being the brightness of his glory, and the express image of his person, and upholding all things by the word of his power, when he had by himself purged our sins, sat down on the right hand of the Majesty on high." Equal glory was promised to the Messiah because He is equal to God.

a

) The symbol

The phrase "sit thou on my right hand" is a symbol of authority because the right hand represents strength and power. Likewise, Christ was put at the right hand of God to symbolize a place of equality, authority, and power. The Greek text of Matthew 22:44 literally says, "Be thou sitting," which is in the continuous imperative tense and means, "take a continuous place of exaltation on the right hand of God."

b

) The subjugation

The authority and power of the Messiah's rule is invincible. Verse 44 quotes Psalm 110:1 as saying, "Till I make thine enemies thy footstool." God was in effect saying, "Messiah! I will subjugate everything under You. All Your enemies will ultimately become Your footstool." That pictures the ancient Oriental practice of a king's putting his heel on the neck of his vanquished foe.

(1) Joshua 10:24-25--Joshua said to his men regarding their captives, "Come near, put your feet upon the necks of these kings. And they came near, and put their feet upon the necks of them. And Joshua said unto them ... Thus shall the Lord do to all your enemies against whom ye fight."

(2) Psalm 2:7-9--David writes from the Messiah's perspective, "I will declare the decree: The Lord hath said unto me, Thou art my Son; this day have I begotten thee. Ask of me, and I shall give thee the nations for thy inheritance, and the uttermost parts of the earth for thy possession. Thou shalt break them with a rod of iron; thou shalt dash them in pieces like a potter's vessel."

D. The Sarcasm (v. 45)

"If David, then, call him, Lord, how is he his son?"

The Pharisees responded to Jesus by saying the Messiah was the son of David, but that was not enough. He is also the Son of God. Verses 43-45 was a riddle the Pharisees couldn't answer. They were the religious leaders of Israel, yet they were stumped. The brain trust of Judaism could not answer Him because they would not acknowledge Jesus as God and man. The Pharisees no doubt asked themselves, "How can the Messiah be the son of David and David's Lord at the same time? He would have to be God and man." They knew Jesus was the son of David because they surely would have checked his genealogy. But they also had overwhelming evidence that He was the Son of God. The Pharisees had to fight the obvious to conclude anything other than that.

The apostle John wrote, "There are also many other things which Jesus did, which, if they should be written every one... the world itself could not contain the books that should be written" (John 21:25). All the healings, miracles, resurrections, and divine teaching that Jesus gave to demonstrated that He was the Son of God. However instead of acknowledging His deity, the Pharisees refused to utter a word.

1. The doctrine

The heart of Christianity is that Jesus Christ is both God and man. The Scripture is abundantly clear about the humanity and deity of Christ. If there were nothing else in the Bible that declared the humanity and deity of Christ, Revelation 22:16 would be enough: "I, Jesus, have sent mine angel to testify unto you these things in the churches. I am the root and the offspring of David." Jesus is David's Son and his Lord at the same time. He is the God-man.

a

) The humanity of Jesus

(1) Luke 2:52--Jesus, like any other human being, "increased in wisdom and stature, and in favor with God and man." He knew pain, thirst, hunger, weariness, sleep, pleasure, and death.

(2) Matthew 26:38--Jesus said, "My soul is exceedingly sorrowful, even unto death." He had feelings (cf. Isa. 53:3; John 13:21). He is called the Son of man (Acts 7:56) and the man Christ Jesus (1 Tim.

2:5). He possessed flesh and blood (Heb. 2:14; 1 John 4:2-3). He could be touched and embraced. His feet could be kissed and washed, and His beard could be plucked. He was crowned with a crown of thorns and nailed to a cross, a spear thrust into His side. He was tempted as we are, but without sin (Heb. 2:9-10, 16-17). He was David's human son.

b

) The deity of Jesus

(1) Matthew 18:20--Jesus said, "Where two or three are gathered together in my name, there am I in the midst of them." He is omnipresent.

He is also omnipotent (Matt. 28:18), the creator and commander of all the elements (Col. 1:16). He is the forgiver of sin and judge of the universe (Acts 10:42). He is omniscient (Col. 2:3) and unchanging (Heb. 13:8).

He demonstrated in His earthly life that He, like God, is holy (Luke 1:35), true (Zech. 9:9), and sovereign (Heb. 1:3). He is loving (Luke 23:34) and glorious (John 13:31). He accepted worship and prayer and claimed to be the only way to God (John 14:6). He carries the same names as God: the rock (1 Cor. 10:4), stone (Luke 20:17), light (John 1:9), Savior (1 Tim. 4:10), redeemer (Isa. 59:20), Holy One (1 John 2:20), King (John 12:13), and first and last (Rev. 22:13).

(2) Romans 1:3--Paul said that God's message concerns His Son, "Jesus Christ our Lord, who was made of the seed of David according to the flesh, and declared to be the son of God with power, according to the spirit of holiness, by the resurrection from the dead." The writers of the New Testament always present Christ as both the Son of David and the Son of God.

(3) 2 Timothy 2:8--Paul said, "Remember that Jesus Christ, of the seed of David, was raised from the dead according to my gospel." The seed of David refers to His humanness, His rising from the dead refers to His deity.

(4) Philippians 2:6-10--Christ, "being in the form of God, thought it not robbery to be equal with God, but made himself of no reputation, and took upon him the form of a servant, and was made in the likeness of men; and, being found in fashion as a man, he humbled himself and became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross. Wherefore, God also hath highly exalted him, and given him a name which is above every name, that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow."

(5) John 1:14--John said, "The word [Jesus] was made flesh, and dwelt among us (and we beheld his glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father), full of grace and truth." John and his contemporaries saw God as much as they saw man.

2. The determination

Theologian Bernard Ramm's classic approach to explaining the union of Christ's deity and humanity in his Protestant Christian Evidences deserves noting ([Chicago: Moody, 1953], pp. 166-183):

"If God became a man we would expect His human life to be sinless." Jesus was.

"If God were to become a man we would expect Him to be holy." Jesus was.

"If God were a man we would expect His words to be the greatest words ever spoken." Jesus' words were.

"If God were a man we would expect Him to exert a profound power over human personality." Jesus did.

"If God were a man we would expect supernatural doings." And Jesus did just that.

"If God were to become a man we would expect Him to manifest the love of God." And Jesus did by dying on the cross.

IV. THE INAPPROPRIATE RESPONSE (v. 46)

"No man was able to answer him a word, neither dared any man from that day forth ask him any more questions."

A. Of the Crowd

Mark adds after this that the common people heard Jesus gladly (12:37). They wanted to hear more, but as followers, they simply followed the trend of their leaders. In a few days, they were screaming for Jesus' blood (Matt. 27:20). Perhaps the multitude wanted to hear more from Him because they were still thinking He was the military hero they were looking for. When it became apparent that He would not overthrow the Roman government, they turned on Him.

B. Of the Pharisees

The Pharisees should have concluded that Jesus was both David's Son and Lord. That was the only logical conclusion. If they had opened their hearts, they would have seen Him for what He is. However, they didn't. They asked Jesus carefully crafted questions and received profound answers--answers they did not expect. However they rejected what He had to say, refusing to be embarrassed by what they considered to be an upstart from Nazareth. Nevertheless they were hopelessly outclassed, and they knew it.

CONCLUSION

People today become so caught up in promoting their self-righteousness that they end up denying Christ and damning their soul. They become so wrapped up in themselves that they don't want to see or hear the truth. Countless believers have defended the deity of Christ with overwhelming evidence, yet people still say nothing and stop asking questions.

What is your response to the deity of Christ? All the evidence was presented, yet the Pharisees concluded He was a blasphemer (Matt. 26:65). Others silently walked away. A few may have believed. What is your response? Jesus Christ came into the world as a man to die for men and as God to gain the victory over death, sin, and hell. He truly is the perfect Savior.

The first person Jesus revealed His identity to was the Samaritan woman in John 4:5-29. She was looking for the Christ. He revealed to her He was the Christ and she was saved. The tragedy is that today there are between 400 and 500 Samaritans on Mount Gerizim who are still waiting for the Messiah. They don't believe He ever came the first time. What is your response?

Focusing on the Facts

1. What is the most important of all questions?
2. What were some of the early opinions concerning Jesus Christ?
3. What is underneath many of the complementary descriptions of Jesus Christ?
4. What is the doctrinal core of Christianity?
5. Describe what at least three groups have said concerning the deity of Jesus Christ.
6. True or False: All false systems have a problem with the unique identity of Jesus Christ.
7. What did Jesus' two-fold confrontation of the Pharisees consist of?
8. Why was Jesus indirect when asking the Pharisees a question about Himself?
9. What was the standard Jewish reply to the question of whose son is the Messiah was? Explain your answer, using Scripture?
10. Why does Matthew go into such great detail in describing the genealogy of Jesus Christ?
11. What can be deduced from the fact that the Pharisees never questioned the genealogy of Jesus?
12. What is the significance of the term kurios when referring to Jesus?
13. What qualifying phrase would force the Pharisees out of thinking that David made a mistake in calling Messiah Lord? What does this phrase mean?
14. True or False: Psalm 110 is the most frequently quoted psalm in the New Testament.
15. What three things did Jesus want to communicate to the Pharisees about Psalm 110:1?
16. What is the meaning of the phrase, "Sit thou on my right hand, till I make thine enemies thy footstool" (Matt. 22:44)?
17. The heart of Christianity is that Jesus Christ is both _____ and _____ .
18. Describe the difference between the humanity and deity of Jesus Christ. Explain your answer from Scripture.

19. What changed the minds of the common people, who initially wanted to hear more from Jesus?
20. Who was the first person Jesus revealed His identity to? What was that person's response?

Pondering the Principles

1. There have been many opinions about Jesus Christ. Some hold Him as the supreme example of virtue, while others emphasize His love or wisdom. What is your opinion of Jesus Christ? Is He only a model for kind behavior toward others or is He is the God-man who came to take away the sin of the world? Your answer will determine your eternal destiny. Study the following passages and conclude from them your opinion of Jesus: John 1:1-18; Colossians 1:14-19; 1 Timothy 3:16; and Hebrews 1:1-3.
2. Through the centuries, many have struggled with the two great realities of Christ's nature--His humanity and His deity--and how they are fused into one Person. Study the following verses, which speak of both the humanity and deity of Christ. Take what you have learned and share it with someone you know is not a believer: Philippians 2:6-10; Acts 17:31; and Hebrews 10:12.

Available online at: <http://www.gty.org>

COPYRIGHT (C) 2026 Grace to You

You may reproduce this Grace to You content for non-commercial purposes in accordance with Grace to You's Copyright Policy (<https://www.gty.org/about#copyright>).