

WHO IS JESUS?
John
By Raymond White

Decades after Matthew, Mark, and Luke wrote their gospels, John finally got around to writing his own. John certainly had the same goal as the earlier writers, to present the events of Jesus' life and lead us to conclude that he was the son of God, the savior of the world. But he seems to have an additional goal that the earlier writers missed; namely, that Jesus was not only the son of God but was also, in some sense, actually God on earth, as Isaiah had declared: *Isaiah 9:6 For unto us a child is born...the mighty God, the everlasting Father...*

I don't want to haggle over what that might mean — why it's true, how it's true — I'm just documenting that it is true: Jesus is God, according to John.

There are different interpretations (Athanasius and others) and I'm not campaigning for or against any of them. I'm just listing the things Jesus said about himself in John's gospel, and leave it to you to struggle with what they mean. Among those verses (that Jesus' declares about himself), are those that specifically deal with his deity. Those are the ones of particular interest and John's special realm. I have marked them with this symbol: "☛".

I will share some of my thoughts afterwards which may be helpful to you or may not.

Here then, is a whirlwind tour of John's Jesus and the conclusions that John presents us to us. The theme that "Jesus is God" is not incidental to his message, it is his message. Enjoy.

- ☛ *John 1:1 ...the word was with God and the word was God.*
- John 2:16 ...make not my Father's house an house of merchandise.*
- John 3:16 For God so loved the world that he gave his only begotten son.*
- John 4:26 ...I that speak unto thee am he.* Jesus declares himself to be the Messiah..
- John 5:20 ...the Father...sheweth him all things...* Jesus has God's knowledge.
- John 5:21 ...even so the son quickeneth whom he will.* Jesus has God's power.
- John 5:23 That all men should honor the Son...* Jesus has God's honor.
- John 5:24 He that heareth my word...hath everlasting life.* Jesus has God's eternal life.
- John 5:32 There is another that beareth witness :37 the Father hath borne witness of me.*
- John 6:35 And Jesus said unto them, I am the bread of life.*
- John 7:16 ...My doctrine is not mine, but his that sent me.*
- John 7:17 ... whether it be of God, or whether I speak of myself.*
- John 7:37 Jesus stood and cried, saying, If any man thirst let him come to me and drink.*
- John 8:12 Then spake Jesus again unto them, saying, I am the light of the world...*
- ☛ *John 8:58 Jesus said unto them, Verily verily, I say unto you, Before Abraham was, I am.*
- John 9:5 I am the light of the world. Then he proved it. :7 [the blind man] came seeing.*
- John 10:11 I am the good shepherd.*
- ☛ *John 10:30 I and my father are one.*
- John 11:25 Jesus said unto her [Martha] , I am the resurrection and the life.*
- John 12:13 [The people] cried, Hosanna: Blessed is the king of Israel.*
- John 13:13 Ye call me master and Lord: and ye say well; for so I am.*
- John 14:6 Jesus saith unto him [Thomas] I am the way, the truth, and the life.*
- ☛ *John 14:9 Jesus saith unto him [Philip]... He that hath seen me hath seen the Father.*
- ☛ *John 14:10 Believest thou not that I am in the Father and the Father in me?*

- John 14:24 ...the word which ye hear is not mine, but the Father's which sent me.*
John 14:28 ...my Father is great than I.
John 15:1 I am the true vine, and my Father is the husbandman.
John 16:27 ...I came out from God.
John 16:28 I came forth from the Father...
John 16:33 ...I have overcome the world.
John 17:5 ... glorify thou me with the glory which I had with thee before the world was.
John 17:21 That they may all be one: as thou Father, art in me, and I in thee.
John 18:37 Pilate...said...Art thou a king? Jesus answered...I am a king.
John 19:19 Pilate wrote a title and put it on the cross...Jesus... the king of the Jews.
 ✦ *John 20:28 And Thomas answered and said unto him, My Lord and my God.*

Okay then. Let's list what we have just learned. Who is Jesus? Jesus is: the son of God, come from God, the Messiah, the Christ, the life of the world (bread, water, vine), the resurrection, the light of the world who literally gives sight to the blind, the overcomer who literally conquers death and sin, the king of Israel and the world, and, finally, he is God, the great I Am, bearing the Father in him.

This last point, that Jesus is God, is the bookends doctrine that John begins with (*1:1*) and ends with (*20:28*) and declares along the way (*8:58, 10:30, 14:9-10*).

But Jesus is a person separate and distinct from his Father (*5:32-37, 7:16-17, 14:24*).

So, how can this be? How can Jesus be God, and yet a separate person distinct from God? That is what John is asking us to believe. How can both be true? Well, physicists face the same sort of dilemma, don't they? When they ask the question: Is light waves or particles? The answer (which is not at all satisfying) is: yes, and no, or both, sort of. It depends on the experiment. Now, we don't therefore conclude that light doesn't exist because our experiments show a contradiction, we just accept that the contradiction is the truth. Maybe that's what we're faced with here. Is Jesus God? The answer is: Yes, and no. It depends on the context of the question. The contradiction is the truth. The rest I'll leave with you for a homework assignment.

It comes down to this: I may never understand it in this life, but I expect to understand it in the next: *1 Corinthians 13:12 ...but then shall I know even as I am known.*

ADDITIONAL VERSES

- Isaiah 9:6 ...a child is born...[who is] The mighty God...The everlasting Father...*
Matthew 1:23 ...they shall call his name Emmanuel which being interpreted is, God with us.
Matthew 19:17 ...Why callest thou me good? There is none good by one, that is, God...
Matthew 28:18 ...All power is given unto me in heaven and in earth.
Luke 22:42 ...nevertheless not my will, but thine, be done.
Acts 7:55 But he [Stephen] ...saw the glory of God, and Jesus standing on the right hand of God.
Acts 20:28 ...feed the church of God, which he hath purchased with his own blood.
2 Corinthians 5:19 To wit, that God was in Christ, reconciling the world unto himself...
Colossians 1:16 For by him were all things created, that are in heaven, and that are in earth...
Hebrews 1:8 Thy throne, O God, is forever and forever. :9 Therefore God, even thy God...
1 John 3:16 Hereby perceive we the love of God, because he laid down his life for us...