

WHO IS JESUS? (MORMON VERSION)

2 Nephi 26:12

By Raymond White

Mormons are reluctant to say “Jesus is God.” And when we do say that, we’re not quite sure what it means. Truth is, however, no one else is quite sure either, and the Athanasius Creed is not as helpful as orthodox Christians would have us believe.

Mormons reject the Athanasius Creed saying that the Father and the Son and the Holy Ghost are three separate persons (first vision). But the creed does not disagree with that. It says, “For there is one person of the Father, another of the Son and another of the Holy Ghost (4)” and “But the whole three persons are co-eternal and co-equal. (25)” So, what is the disagreement?

Perhaps we disagree with the creed saying that the Father is God and the Son is God (14), and yet there is one God (15), and yet the Father is not the Son and the Son is not the Father (4). Are those three separate ideas contradictory? Maybe, or maybe not. You decide.

But there is this one contradiction anyway: “The Father is incomprehensible, the Son is incomprehensible and the Holy Ghost is incomprehensible. (8)” Why is that a contradiction? Because if God is incomprehensible then why so much effort trying to explain it? The creed is pointless trying to comprehend the incomprehensible.

I am not writing this to agree or disagree with the Athanasius Creed. I am writing this so that whatever you believe about that creed or the trinity or the godhead you ought to know the scriptural facts. And one thing the scriptures insist on is that Jesus is God, whatever that means. I’m not saying that I understand it or can explain it. I am saying, like it or not, that is what the scriptures say, and if we say that Jesus is not God, then we, and not the Orthodox, are wrong.

So let’s get to it. What exactly do the scriptures say about the deity of Christ?

[1] MORMON VERSES

Introduction to The Book of Mormon: Jesus is the Christ, the Eternal God...

Testimony of Three Witnesses: ...the Father...the Son... the Holy Ghost, which is one God.

2 Nephi 11:7 But there is a God and he is Christ.

2 Nephi 25:29 ...ye must bow down and worship him [If we worship only God then Jesus is God]

2 Nephi 26:12 ...Jesus is the Christ, the Eternal God;

2 Nephi 31:21 ...of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost, which is one God...

Mosiah 3:5 ...the Lord Omnipotent who reigneth...from eternity...shall come down...

Mosiah 5:15 ...Christ, the Lord God Omnipotent...

Mosiah 15:1 ...God himself shall come down among the children of men, and shall redeem...

Mosiah 15:3 ...he was conceived by the power of God ... thus becoming the Father and Son—

Mosiah 15:4 And they are one God, yea, the very Eternal Father of heaven and earth.

Mosiah 16:15 ...Christ the Lord, who is the very eternal Father.

Alma 11:28 Now Zeezrom said: Is there more than one God? :29 And he [Amulek] said, No.

Alma 11:38 ...Is the Son of God the very Eternal Father? :39 Amulek said...Yea, he is...

Helaman 14:12 ... Jesus Christ...the Father of heaven and of earth, the Creator of all things...

Mormon 3:21 ...Jesus, whom they slew, was the very Christ and the very God.

Mormon 7:7 ...the Father...the Son...the Holy Ghost, which are one God...

D&C 1:20 ...in the name of God the Lord, even the savior of the world;

D&C 19:18 Which suffering caused myself, even God, the greatest of all...to bleed at every pore
D&C 20:28 Which Father, Son, and Holy Ghost are one God, infinite and eternal, without end.
D&C 27:1 Listen to the voice of Jesus Christ, your Lord, your God ...
D&C 35:2 I am Jesus Christ...who was crucified...:8...I am God...
D&C 93:3 ...I am in the Father, and the Father in me, and the Father and I are one—
D&C 121:28...nothing shall be withheld whether there be one God or many gods...[uncertainty]
D&C 132:11 ...I and my Father...:12 I am the Lord thy God...

When you see all those verses together they're overwhelming, hard to argue against.

[2] MORMON HYMNS

Now, in addition to our scriptures, there are our hymns which we sing weekly. Is the hymn book inspired? Maybe.

66 **verse 2:** *The Lord, the Savior, reigns, The God of truth and love.*
67 **verse 2:** *Jesus, our Lord and God...*
134 **verse 3:** *I believe in Christ — my Lord, my God!* [authored by Bruce R. McConkie]
186 **verse 4:** *These emblems of the flesh and blood of our Redeemer, Savior, God.*
205 **verse 2:** *He came down to earth from heaven, Who is God and Lord of all...*

[3] MORMON AUTHORITIES

And of course, there are the brethren.

“He is our advocate, mediator, and judge. Because he is God, he is perfectly equitable with justice and mercy. As God, He has infinite power, intelligence, and love. He lives today as our Lord, our Master, our savior, our Redeemer, and our God.”

— Ezra Taft Benson, *Ensign*, June 1990, page 6.

“...the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost are one God in a sense far greater than merely being one in purpose. What is Abinidi's message? (Mosiah 15:1-5) He tells us that God comes down and is called the Son; he is the Father, and as the Son, he is subject to the Father. So it is recorded in the Book of Mormon; the translation is correct and the doctrine is true. Ought we not to understand these things and to come to a knowledge of what is meant by the inspired author?”

— Bruce R. McConkie, *The Promised Messiah*, page 5-6

“Jesus was God and he knew it.”

— Bruce R. McConkie, *Doctrinal New Testament Commentary*, Volume 1, page 711

“If it be true, as Mr. V. asserts it is, that the Father alone is God, then it must follow that the Son of God, Jesus the Christ, is not God; that the Holy Ghost is not God! Yet the New Testament, in representing the Father as addressing Jesus, says — ‘Thy throne, O God, is forever and forever’ (Hebrews 1:8). Here is the positive word of the Father that Jesus, the son, is God; for he addresses him as such.”

[4] BIBLE VERSES

Now let's come to grips with those Bible verses that insist that Jesus is God — those verses that orthodox Christians and not-so-Orthodox Christians such as Mormons haggle over so much. And why do we haggle over them? Not because we like to haggle, but because those verses *are* difficult, and complex, and hard to understand, and because they seem so very important that we cannot just ignore them. They seem to be the very core of what or who Jesus is. So it is fair enough to have different opinions about them and to disagree, but it is not fair to burn each other at the stake or curse each other to hell for our beliefs.

We should understand these verses as well as we can so that we don't find ourselves arguing against something that is actually true. So here they are. The Orthodox might call them trinity verses and Mormons might call them godhead verses, but it's what they say that matters.

Isaiah 9:6 *For unto us a child is born, unto us a son is given: and the government shall be upon his shoulder: and his name shall be called Wonderful, Counsellor, The mighty God, The Everlasting Father, The Prince of Peace.*

Matthew 19:16 *And, behold, one came and said unto him, Good Master, what good thing shall I do, that I may have eternal life? :17 And he said unto him, Why callest thou me good? There is none good but one, that is, God ...*

[If Jesus is good and only God is good then Jesus is God.]

John 1:1 *In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the word was God. :2 The same was in the beginning with God. :3 And all things were made by him; and without him was not anything made that was made. :14 And the word 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 8:58 *Jesus said ... Verily, verily, I say unto you, Before Abraham was, I am.*

John 10:30 *I and my Father are one.*

John 14:7 *If ye had known me, ye should have known my Father also: and from henceforth ye know him, and have seen him. :8 Philip saith unto him Lord, shew us the Father, and it sufficeth us. :9 Jesus saith unto him, Have I been so long with you, and yet hast thou not known me, Philip? He that hath seen me hath seen the Father; and how saith thou then, Shew us the Father? :10 Believest thou not that I am in the Father and the Father in me? The words that I speak unto you I speak not of myself; but the Father that dwelleth in me, he doeth the works. :11 Believe me that I am in the father, and the Father in me: or else believe me for the very works' sake. :20 At that day ye shall know that I am in my Father, and ye in me, and I in you.*

John 20:28 *And Thomas answered and said unto him, My LORD and my God.*

[After all that Thomas had seen and heard, this was his conclusion, that Jesus is 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, that are in earth, visible and invisible, whether they be thrones, or dominions, or principalities, or powers: all things were created by him, and for him:

Colossians 2:9 For in him dwelleth all the fullness of the Godhead bodily.

Hebrews 1:8 But unto the Son he saith, Thy throne, O God, is for ever and ever ...
[This is God the Father speaking to God the Son; in other words, God's God.]

1 John 3:16 Hereby perceive we the love of God, because he laid down his life for us ...
[God died for us. That God is Jesus Christ.]

So, what do you make of these Trinitarian Bible verses? Was Athanasius right or wrong? That's not so important, is it? What is important is: are *you* right? And to be right you must at least know the pertinent verses (now you have a list) and struggle with them like everyone else. And above all, believe them. Jesus, after all, is God — whatever that means.