

What Did Jesus Think About Himself?

INTRODUCTION

- A. We praise Jesus as God.
 - 1. We sing “All hail the pow’r of Jesus’ name! Let angels prostrate fall!”
 - 2. We take the Lord’s Supper during which we remember Jesus’ death for our sins.
 - 3. We pray in his name.
- B. But did Jesus really claim to be God?
 - 1. Many modern critics would have us answer “No.”
 - a. They attempt to uncover in the Gospels the “historical Jesus.”
 - b. They see much of the Gospels as legend, and they attempt to get at the real story.
 - 1) They attempt to find the words we know Jesus said.
 - 2) They attempt to find the deeds we know Jesus did.
 - 2. Regardless of what these critics attempt to accomplish, the Gospel records exist.
 - a. These Gospels were written shortly after Jesus’ earthly life and ministry.
 - b. These Gospels were written before legends really had the time to evolve.
 - c. These Gospels were written when eye-witnesses to these events were still living.
- C. Let’s examine the Gospels and see if Jesus really claimed to be God.

JESUS CLAIMED TO BE THE SON OF MAN

- A. Jesus’ title “Son of Man” goes far beyond claiming his humanity.
- B. In a vision of Daniel, Daniel saw the Son of Man coming and receiving dominion, glory and a kingdom (Dan. 7:13-14).
- C. Throughout the Gospels Jesus claims to be the Son of Man.
 - 1. When speaking of his coming death, Jesus said, “The Son of Man is about to be betrayed into the hands of men” (Mt. 17:22).
 - 2. Notice Jesus did not say, “a son of man.”
 - a. Had Jesus merely said “a son of man,” he would merely have been claiming to be a human being.
 - b. But, using “the Son of Man” he equates himself with the Son of Man in Daniel.

JESUS CLAIMED TO HAVE AUTHORITY

- A. When discussing the Law, rabbis would often quote one another for authority.
- B. Jesus refers to himself as one having authority.
 - 1. For example, when Jesus spoke about hatred in the Sermon on the Mount, he said, “You have heard it said...but I say to you” (Mt. 5:21-22).
 - a. Six times in the Sermon on the Mount, Jesus uses this formula.
 - b. Jesus was sitting aside the Law of Moses and claiming to have superior authority to it.
 - 2. Jesus taught as one having authority, not as the scribes (Mt. 7:28-29).
- C. Many Jews refuse to follow Jesus today because he claimed to have the same (if not more) authority than Moses’ law.

JESUS CLAIMED AUTHORITY TO FORGIVE SINS

- A. Jesus forgave a paralytic and said, “The Son of Man has power on earth to forgive sins” (Mk. 2:10).
- B. The crowd present asked, “Who can forgive sins but God alone?” (Mk. 2:7).
 - 1. That is exactly the point—No one but God can forgive sins.
 - 2. Since Jesus had the authority to forgive sins, he is divine.

JESUS ACCEPTED TESTIMONY AS GOD’S SON

- A. When individuals claimed he was divine, Jesus agreed with them.
 - 1. When Peter confessed his faith in Christ as the “Son of God,” Jesus responds by blessing Peter (Mt. 16:17).
 - 2. When the high priest asked Jesus if he were the Christ, Jesus replied, “I am” (Mk. 14:61-62).
 - a. The high priest tore his clothes in dismay, because he thought Jesus had blasphemed.
 - b. By custom, the high priest was not to rend his garments for personal trouble--He could only rend his

- garment when acting as a judge and blasphemy was uttered in his presence.
- B. The Jewish people understood that Jesus claimed to be God--While he was being crucified, the crowd taunted him with "Let [God] deliver Him now if He will have Him; for He said, 'I am the Son of God'" (Mt. 27:43).
 - C. The inscription above Jesus' cross read: "This is Jesus the King of the Jews" (Mt. 27:37)--Either Jesus claimed to be King of the Jews or someone mistakenly thought Jesus made that affirmation.

JESUS CLAIMED TO DETERMINE PEOPLE'S DESTINY BEFORE GOD

- A. If one confesses Christ, he will confess that one before the Father. If one refuses to confess Christ, he will deny that one before the Father (Lk. 12:8-9).
- B. "Therefore I said to you that you will die in your sins; for if you do not believe that I am He, you will die in your sins" (Jn. 8:24).

JESUS ACCEPTED WORSHIP

- A. When individuals would worship Jesus, he accepted their worship.
 - 1. A leper came and worshipped Jesus (Mt. 8:2).
 - 2. The blind man Jesus healed worshipped him (Jn. 9:35-39).
 - 3. When Jesus calmed the sea, the disciples worshipped him (Mt. 14:33).
 - 4. One commandment was to have no other gods beside the Lord God (Ex. 20:3).
- B. When beings less than God were worshipped, they refused the worship.
 - 1. When Cornelius worshipped Peter, Peter replied, "Stand up; I myself am also a man" (Acts 10:25-26).
 - 2. John worshipped the angel who showed him Revelation. The angel stopped him saying "Worship God" (Rev. 22:8-9).
- C. Jesus instructed the disciples to pray by his name (Jn. 14:13-14).

JESUS PRAYED TO GOD USING "ABBA"

- A. When Jesus prayed to the Father, he did so using "Abba"--When praying about the crucifixion, Jesus prayed "Abba, Father" (Mk. 14:36).
- B. "Abba" is Aramaic for "Father," yet the term denotes a special closeness. The term is something like our term "Daddy."
- C. Only because Jesus came and opened this avenue are we able to pray "Abba, Father" (Rom. 8:15).

JESUS CLAIMED TO BE JEHOVAH

- A. When Moses inquired about God's name, God replied "I AM" (Ex. 3:14).
- B. Jesus claimed to be the "I AM" (Jn. 8:58).
 - 1. We know this is what Jesus meant by the reaction of the multitude.
 - 2. They picked up stones to stone him, because they believed he had blasphemed

JESUS CLAIMED TO BE EQUAL WITH THE FATHER

- A. Jesus claimed that he and the Father were one (Jn. 10:30).
- B. The Jews picked up stones to stone him, because he had made himself God (Jn. 10:33).

CONCLUSION

- A. Jesus told his disciples to believe in him (Jn. 14:1).
- B. Do you believe in him? What will you do with Jesus?