

To Our Readers:

The title of this treatise by Professor J. W. Roberts, “ What Do You Think About The Christ?” points out and emphasizes the heart and core of Christianity. What does Jesus mean to me? Is He my Prophet sent from heaven, my Priest who has made the supreme sacrifice, and the King of kings who rules in my life? What are my conceptions concerning His nature and power? Do I believe that He is-the Son of God (Matthew 22: 41-46)? The Only Begotten from the Father who existed from eternity, but was sent to tabernacle among men (John 1:1-18)? Or, on the other hand, do I believe that He was only a man, and that He had no existence before His birth of the Virgin Mary? Do I feel that He is only a "little god" completely inferior to the Father and created by Him?

From the first century to the present time, incorrect views and false doctrines have been taught concerning the nature of Christ. Whether it be the Gnostics of the first century, the Arians of the fourth, or the followers of Felix Manalo and the Jehovah's Witnesses of the twenty-first century, the principle is the same. We must have the correct belief concerning Jesus the Christ! This can only be achieved by a careful examination of the Scriptures with an unbiased mind and a desire to know what God has said concerning His Son. In this scholarly writing, Mr. Roberts has appealed once and again to the Scriptures as the only authority in this matter. He has searched not only the common versions, but the original languages of the Bible as well. The honest searcher for truth will examine these arguments carefully, realizing that they cannot be discarded without serious investigation and earnest inquiry.

Professor J. W. Roberts was well qualified to discuss the Deity of Christ on a scholarly level. He received his B. A. degree from Abilene Christian College, his M.A. from the University of Wichita, and his Ph. D. degree in Greek from the University of Texas. Until his death, he was a professor of Greek and Bible at Abilene Christian College, and head of the Department of Bible of its graduate school. Thus, he had an excellent background in Bible and Greek. He also contributed much in the area of religious writing. He was the editor of the scholarly journal, The Restoration Quarterly, author of a fine commentary on the book of James, author of A Grammar of the Greek New Testament For Beginners, and staff writer for a number of religious periodicals.

The publishers of this booklet send it forth with the prayer that it will be read by many who already have a firm faith in Jesus as the divine Son of God, and that it will be passed on to those who have been troubled by the doctrines of men. It is intended to be non-sectarian and undenominational. We send it forth with the sincere wish that it will give lasting value to everyone who reads it. Your letters of comment and questions will be welcomed.

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THE DEITY OF CHRIST

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What does the Bible teach about the Deity of Jesus Christ? He was a man as is plainly stated in the Bible (1 Timothy 2:5, "the man Jesus Christ"). **BUT, WAS HE ONLY A MAN?**

Was He not in truth "God?" This tract is written to affirm the New Testament teaching of the incarnation of Jesus Christ -- that Jesus was the Christ and that Christ was "the Word which was in the beginning which was with God, and which was God" (John 1:1). "And the Word became flesh and dwelt among us" (John 1:14).

INTRODUCTION

From the early period there have been those who denied the Deity of Jesus Christ. Indeed, many of the later books of the New Testament were written against those who denied that Jesus was both God and man --- that Jesus Christ was God become flesh or man. These false teachers were early or incipient Gnostics. They taught that Jesus was born a man in the flesh just as any other man, but that at Jesus' baptism he was "adopted" by the Christ-Spirit. They fully admitted that this Spirit was a divine Spirit who had come to bring salvation to mankind by bringing what they called the true knowledge ("gnosis") to man. But, they denied that God was actually incarnate or had become flesh in Jesus of Nazareth. It was these whom John the apostle called the Antichrist, because "they will not confess that Jesus Christ has come in the flesh" (II John 7), or "denied that Jesus is the Christ" (I John 2:18, 22). And, it was against them that John in his Gospel wrote that "In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God" (John 1:1). "And the Word became flesh and dwelt among us., ." (John 1:14).

(In the following pages we will make it abundantly clear that in refuting these false teachers the writers of the New Testament taught that Jesus was God in the flesh).

After New Testament times, many false teachers arose who denied the doctrine of the deity of Christ. Some of these were called "docetists" because they taught that the Christ-God had not become flesh in Jesus the man, but only "seemed" to be. These false teachers were denounced by believers like Ignatius (110 A. D.) and Polycarp who were followers or disciples of the Apostle John. Ignatius many times called Jesus "God." For example, Ignatius spoke in his Epistle to the Trallians of "the God Jesus Christ" (7:1). See also his Epistle to the Smyrnians (10:1), "Christ God"; Ephesians (7:2), "the one becoming God in flesh".

Among other early heretical teachers who denied the full Deity of Jesus Christ was Arius, who was condemned by the Council of Nicea in 325 A. D.. He taught that the Son was not with the Father in the beginning but was a "creature" or "creation" of God, and thus not eternal with the Father.

Among modern religious groups, many deny either the Deity of Jesus, or deny that Jesus Christ as God is different from the Father. The "Jesus only" groups teach that "Father", "Son", and "Holy Spirit" are simply different manifestations of the same personality. Unitarians generally deny that there is more than one person in the Godhead. Of course, Unitarians are usually modernists or liberals who deny all miracles or supernatural in the world. Others deny the real Deity of the Christ or the Holy Spirit. Among these are the sect which calls itself "Jehovah's Witnesses" (formerly the followers of Pastor Russell and Judge Rutherford). Many of the published works of this denomination are taken up in denying that Jesus Christ was God manifested in the flesh.

In the Republic of the Philippines, there are the followers of Felix Manalo, who established the Iglesia ni Kristo in 1914. The teaching of this sect is illustrated in the booklet Christ God, Investigated--False by Erano G. Manalo and Cesar Castro. This work teaches that Jesus was a mere man and that his true nature was manifested by the human characteristics affirmed of him while on earth. The pamphlet specifically denies that there are passages in the Bible which teach that Jesus was Divine. Verses which so teach are taken up and explained away or repudiated by the tract.

DEPENDENCE UPON MODERNIST TRANSLATIONS

It is quite interesting that those who deny the Deity of Jesus Christ cannot prove their denial by the standard translations of the world's great biblical scholars like the King James, the English and American Revised, the Revised Standard, and the New English Bible, but must either put out their own dogmatic translations like Jehovah's Witnesses Emphatic Diaglott and New World Translation, or must resort to modernist translations of Individual liberal scholars like James Moffatt. One should beware of doctrines which are so dependent on private translations. As a rule, a doctrine is simply a false doctrine which cannot be proved by the scholarship of the world in the translations where the body of scholars in their work become a "check" on "private interpretations."

Felix Manalo's group makes great use of Moffatt's translation. In fact, often their only defense against the plain teaching of the Scriptures is to quote Moffatt. If Moffatt were an impartial witness, there would be no objection to this. **But, Moffatt made a reputation through long years of teaching and writing as one of the most radical unbelievers**, not only in the Deity of Jesus Christ, his Virgin Birth, and his resurrection, but in the inspiration and divine origin of the Scriptures, and all miracles or the supernatural. His radicalism is illustrated in the introduction of his translation (1954 edition) by his acceptance of the explanation that the first five books of the Bible were not written by inspiration through Moses but were compiled from human documents by an unknown author in the Seventh Century B. C. (p. xi). He also rejected the Apostolic authorship of the Four Gospels in favor of a human theory of unknown sources like "O", "Ur-Mark", "M", and "L" (p. xxix).

A good example of Moffatt's unbelief is illustrated by his translation of Matthew 1:16; "Jacob the father of Joseph. . . the father of Jesus who is called Christ". Notice that he calls Joseph the "father" of Jesus, whereas the Greek of all manuscripts reads otherwise, and the first chapter of Matthew shows clearly that Joseph was not Jesus' father. For this rendering, Moffatt adopted the single reading, not of a Greek manuscript, but that of one copy of a translation into Aramaic (Syriac) which implies the Greek: "Jacob begat Joseph, and Joseph, to whom the Virgin Mary was betrothed, begat Jesus, called the Christ." This one source, the Sinaitic Syriac, was accepted as the text against all other sources for the Greek which read, "Jacob begat Joseph, the husband of Mary from whom (a feminine relative pronoun) Jesus who is called the Christ was born". This is a good example of the kind of translation Moffatt is.

It is true that a liberal, even unbelieving scholar like Moffatt could make a good translation of the Bible. All the standard translations have had liberal scholars on their translation committees. But, a committee of scholars serves as a check on individual tendencies. Moffatt, as a single radical scholar, stands condemned by numerous examples of dogmatic incorrect translation which perverts the Word of God.

It is certainly a hopeless theory which can be "proven" only by an appeal to such a translation. But, in most contentions, Moffatt is the sole support for the Manalo group's evasion of the teaching of the Scriptures.

The following plain teaching of the Word of God sets forth the teaching of God's Inspired Scriptures on the question of the Deity of Jesus Christ. In the Scriptures, it is a question of what the author was plainly intending to say. If one does not believe the Bible and does not want to accept what it says -- this is one thing. But, in this case, he should not try to make the Bible say something different from what the language says. It would be much more manly simply to deny that what the Scriptures says is true. Let the reader beware of "wresting (twisting) the Scriptures to his own destruction" (II Peter 3:16).

JESUS CHRIST A MAN--- BUT MORE THAN A MAN

Perhaps the most wasted effort by many who deny the Deity of Jesus Christ is the attempt to prove that Jesus was a man. Of course, the Bible teaches that Jesus was a man, but the question is, "Was He a mere man?" "Was He only a man?" Is there any person so blasphemous as to affirm that Jesus Christ, the Lord of Glory, is no more than a man?

The Christ was prophesied as "a man of sorrows" (Isaiah 53:3); He was "a man approved of God" (Acts 2:22); of Him it was said, "by man came also the resurrection of the dead" (I Corinthians 15:20-22), and also, "there is one mediator between God and man, the man Jesus Christ" (I Timothy 2:5).

It is often pointed out that while on earth Jesus showed human characteristics: He was conceived in a woman's womb (Matthew 1:18-24), born of woman (Luke 2:5-7), was circumcised (Luke 2:21), was hungry (Matthew 4:2), thirsty (John

19:28), wept or cried (John 11:35), slept (Matthew 8:24), died (I Corinthians 15:3), and was buried (Mark 15:46).

JESUS CHRIST, A TRUE MAN! It is really not necessary to quote these passages. No one today denies that Jesus was a human being --- a real man. In fact, all believers in the Deity of Jesus Christ insist on it. Jesus was the Word of God in Human Flesh (John 1:14). He was one who though "existing in the form of God, emptied himself, taking upon him the form of a servant, and being found in fashion as a man, became obedient to death" (Philippians 2:6-8). In fact, as shown in the introduction to this tract, John's writings were written primarily against the docetists or gnostics who freely admitted that the Christ was God but who affirmed that he only seemed to be a man -- who affirmed that he was not God in human flesh. That is why John said that those who denied that Jesus was the Christ, or that Christ had come in the flesh were "antichrists" (I John 2:18,22; II John 7). It was this fact which made Peter say that "there shall be false teachers among you who shall privily bring in damnable heresies, even denying the Lord that bought them and bring upon themselves swift destruction" (II Peter 2:1).

Whether Jesus Christ was a man is **NOT the question**. NO ONE denies this. **But was Jesus only a man?** The following Scriptural facts show that **Jesus was MORE than a man.**

1. **He was conceived of a virgin** (a woman who had never known a man sexually) and consequently had no human father.

"A virgin shall conceive and bear a child" (Isaiah 7:14).

"Before they (Mary and Joseph) came together she was found to be with child of the Holy Spirit" (Matthew 1:18).

"And Mary said, How can this be since I have no husband? And the angel said to her, The Holy Spirit will come upon you and the power of the Most High will overshadow you; therefore the child to be born will be called Holy, the Son of God" (Luke 1:34-35).

QUESTION: Was there ever a mere man, a being who was human only, who was born in such a manner? What about a doctrine which teaches that the things which happened to Jesus "show his true nature by acts and events inherent in human nature?" Jesus' miraculous birth alone shows that he was more than a man.

2. **Jesus' WORDS proved to the people of his day that He was not a mere man.**

The soldiers who were sent to arrest Jesus returned saying, "Never man so spoke" (John 7:46).

"Then Simon Peter answered him, Lord, to whom shall we go? thou hast the words of eternal life. And we believe and are sure that thou art that Christ, the Son of the living God" (John 6:68-69).

"For he whom God hath sent speaketh the Words of God" (John 3:34).

The reason Jesus spoke as no man ever spoke is that He is the "bread of life come down from heaven" (John 6:51).

3. The **WORKS or MIRACLES of Jesus** (for example, his opening the eyes of a man born blind) proved that **He is MORE than a man.**

"Since the world began it was never heard that any one opened the eyes of a man born blind" (John 9:32).

"But the men marvelled, saying, What manner of man is this, that even the winds and the sea obey him?" (Matthew 8:27)

"The works which the Father hath given me to finish, the same works I do; these works bear witness of me that the Father hath sent me" (John 5:36)

The fact that Jesus Christ did miracles which no man has ever done, proved him more than a man.

4. **Jesus Christ SAW and DECLARED what no man ever has.**

"No man hath seen God at any time but the only begotten God (some versions have "Son" here), who is in the bosom of the Father, He hath declared him" (John 1:18).

Jesus is said by this verse, not only to be "God" (according to the best texts, see below), but also to have seen and declared what no man hath seen. Thus, he must have been more than a man.

5. **Jesus had POWER, (which no man has ever had), to FORGIVE SINS.**

"The Son of Man hath power on earth to forgive sins" (Mark 2:10).

The question of the enemies was a natural one: "Who can forgive sins except God?" (Mark 2:7).

6. Jesus COULD NOT BE HELD BY DEATH as all men are.

"It is appointed unto man once to die.... " (Hebrews 9:27).

"Whom God raised up having loosed the pangs of death because it was not possible that he should be holden of (held by) it" (Acts 2:24).

For men death is the natural, final end to life; Jesus was more than a man because he could not be held by death.

7. Jesus was proved more than a man by His RESURRECTION.

Jesus by His power raised three persons from the dead during His life, demonstrating His power over death; but it was by His "taking up again" of His own life (John 10:18) that He proved Himself more than a man; "He was proved to be the Son of God with power according to the Spirit of Holiness by His resurrection from the dead" (Romans 1:4).

All these facts prove that, while Christ was a man, He was more than a Man. To say that He was MORE than a man does not necessarily prove that He was God, though it does prove that "his essential nature" is not demonstrated by the "acts and events inherent in a mere man" as Manalo claimed.

We shall now show that, according to the express statements of the Bible the reason that Jesus Christ was more than a man is that He was GOD in human form.

THE PRE-EXISTENCE OF CHRIST AS THE WORD WHO WAS GOD

Jesus Christ is proved to be God by the revelation that HE EXISTED FROM THE BEGINNING and is therefore ETERNAL in His being and nature as, of course, ONLY GOD IS.

1. The Christ is expressly said to have EXISTED FROM "ETERNITY"

"But thou, Bethlehem Ephratah, though thou be little among the thousands of Judah, yet out of thee shall he come forth unto me that is to be the ruler in Israel; Whose goings forth have been from of old, from eternity (from everlasting)" (Micah 5:2).

This scripture, which predicts the place of the birth of Christ (Matthew 2:6; John 7:42), declares that He existed from everlasting or eternity.

2. **Jesus Christ was IN THE BEGINNING!**

"In the beginning was the word, the word was with God. . ." (John 1:1).

"That which was from the beginning... concerning the Word of life...which life was manifested. . . we declare" (I John 1:1-2).

Jesus Christ "who is the beginning" (Colossians 1:18)

Jesus said, "Fear not, I am the first and the last" (Revelation 1:17);
"Behold I come quickly.... I am Alpha and Omega, the beginning and the end. the first and the last" (Revelation 22:13).

3. **Jesus Christ the Son was BEFORE ALL THINGS**

He was "the Son of God's love..., who was before all things" (Colossians 1:13, 17).

4. **Jesus Christ was the great I AM who existed before Abraham.**

"Jesus said, Your father Abraham (the patriarch who died 1900 years before Jesus was born) rejoiced to see my day! And he saw it, and was glad, Then the Jews said unto him, Thou art not yet fifty years old, and hast thou seen Abraham? Jesus said unto them. Verily, verily I say unto you, before Abraham was, I AM" (John 8:56-58).

NOTE WELL: The name revealed to Moses in the burning bush as the God of Abraham was the "I AM" (Exodus 3:14; 6:3). Jesus' use of I AM in John 8:58 not only shows the pre-existence of Jesus; it also declares His right to the name of "God."

5. Jesus Christ was the instrument of the Godhead in CREATING THE WORLD and everything in it.

"By him (the Word which became flesh) were all things made which hath been made" (John 1:3).

Jesus Christ is the "Son.... through whom He made the world" (Hebrews 1:2).

"Because by Him were created all things in heaven and upon the earth" (Colossians 1:16).

6. Jesus Christ was NOT OF THIS WORLD!

Jesus declared that he was "from above" and "not of this world" (John 8:23; 17:16). He also "descended out of heaven" which was his true abode (John 3:13). In the same way, at his ascension "he ASCENDED WHERE HE WAS BEFORE!" (John 6:62)

7. Christ as the Son is ETERNAL!

"Unto us a Son is born, unto us a child is given. His name shall be called... Everlasting Father" (Isaiah 9:6).

NOTE: The phrase "everlasting father" in Hebrew literally is "Father of eternity," meaning one who had eternity (without beginning or end) as his nature, just as "father of strength" means one who is almighty and "father of wisdom" means one who is wise.

All these Scriptures show that Jesus is everlasting or eternal, that he existed from the beginning and before all things. **ONLY GOD IS ETERNAL!** The Son of God shares this characteristic with God the Father.

JESUS CHRIST IS GOD

Most important of all in showing the Deity of Jesus Christ is the fact that the Bible frequently refers to him as "God." There are always objections which unbelievers can make on individual passages. But these are not sufficient. The objections do not overcome what the Scriptures really say. Over and over the

Scriptures continue to repeat that JESUS CHRIST IS GOD.

1. **It was PROPHESIED that he should be called "GOD!"**

"Unto us a Son is Given.... He shall be called Wonderful, Counsellor, the **Mighty God**, the everlasting Father, the Prince of Peace" (Isaiah 9:6).
It needs little demonstration that this refers to Christ, the Prince of Peace.

2. **Jesus Christ was to be given the title: "GOD WITH US" (Emmanuel)!**

"Behold the virgin shall be with Child and shall bring forth a son and they shall call his name Emmanuel, which is being interpreted **GOD WITH US**" (Matthew 1:23; See Isaiah 7:14)

3. **Jesus Christ is called "The ONLY (or only begotten) GOD" in the text of John 1:18.**

"The only begotten God who is in the bosom of the Father, he hath declared him" (John 1:18, New American Standard Version).

NOTE WELL: The reading "God" instead of the King James "Son" is found in the best ancient Greek Bibles: it is the reading in the Sinaitic (Codex Aleph), the Vatican (Codex B), Ephraemi (C), Paris (L), and Ms 33, In addition, it is found in the Syriac (Peshito) and is in the text as quoted by Irenaeus, Clement of Alexander, and Origen. It has recently been confirmed by the earliest and most important manuscript of John's Gospel, the Bodmere 2 (P 66) manuscript. This most certainly correct reading proves that John called Jesus Christ the Son, "God". This is the reading in Nestle's Greek text, the most up-to-date and scientific Greek New Testament. This translation is given in the New American Standard, The New Testament in Modern English by Weymouth, the Amplified New Testament and others. Even Moffatt admits that the reading "theos" ("God") here is "the more original reading than the variant "Son" (Footnote to John 1:18). Let all unbelievers know that John called Jesus "God only begotten".

4. **Jesus Christ, before he emptied himself to take on human form, was "in the FORM OF GOD".**

"Have this mind in you, which was also in Christ Jesus; who existing in the form of God, counted not the being on an equality with God a thing to be

grasped, but emptied himself, taking the form of a servant, being found in fashion as a man, became obedient unto death....." (Philippians 2: 5-8).

NOTE WELL: The word "existing" (huparcho) in its root meaning (being built off the word "arche" ("beginning"), signifies "to be already," "to be beforehand"; that is, it refers to the original and natural state of Christ. The word "form" (of God) expresses the sum of the characteristics which make a thing what it is - as iron in the "form of an ax" refers to the characteristics which make the substance in it different from a spade.

One great Bible scholar has said, "Thus the form of God is the sum of the characteristics which make the being we call God, specifically God, rather than some other being, an angel, say, or a man. When our Lord is said to be in the "form of God": therefore, he is declared, in the most express manner possible to be all that God is, to possess the whole fullness of attributes which make God, God."

(B. Warfield, International Standard Bible Encyclopedia, p. 2339).

Nor does Paul intimate that in emptying Himself and taking human form Jesus ceased to be Deity. He did not use the past tense ("though he was in the form of God"), but still speaks in the present ("though he exists" in the present tense). The passage does not teach that He ceased to be God when He became man. Though found in "fashion as a man," he was still Divine. He emptied Himself of the FORM of God, but NOT THE NATURE OF GOD.

5. **Jesus Christ is called "GOD OVER ALL" by Paul.**

Our Lord was "of the Jewish fathers as concerning the flesh:" but he is also The Christ, "the one who is God over all, blessed forever" (Romans 9:5).

NOTE WELL: To make anything else out of Paul's statement here than a direct reference to Christ being "God over all" required ending the sentence with the phrase "as concerning the flesh," and bringing in a completely new verb which is not in the text, making a new sentence where Paul did not make one --- "of the fathers according to the flesh. God (may He be) blessed forever." But, Paul did not add the verb "may He be!" It is not in the text. A Greek sentence may be elliptical, and the verb may be supplied where it is needed to make sense. But, this sentence makes good sense as Paul wrote it. The rendering, "Christ.... WHO IS GOD OVER ALL blessed forever" is given by the King James, the Revised Version, The New

Testament in Modern English, the New Testament in Modern Speech, and it is the reading in Nestle's Greek Text. **Christ is GOD OVER ALL!**

6. **Jesus Christ the Son IS GOD WHOSE THRONE IS FOREVER!**

"But to the son (in contrast to angels) He (God the Father) says, Thy throne, O God, is forever and ever" (Psalms 45:6 quoted in Hebrews 1:8).

NOTE WELL: The expression "O God" is a correct rendering as a vocative case (English nominative of address) of the noun for "God." The vocative as a direct address to an individual by name is a very frequent construction in Greek. Concerning it, a well-known Greek grammarian says:

"Where it is desired to ascribe to an object of address special definiteness, the article is used; and since it is necessary to use the nominative form of the article - there being no distinct vocative form - this influences the use of the nominative ending for the noun, but the vocative function is there just the same."

(Dana and Mantey, A Manual Grammar of the Greek New Testament, p. 71)

Instances of this use of the nominative form of the noun with the article for the vocative are very frequent. In Hebrews 10:9 where the Son says, "I came, to do thy will, O God," the words "O God" in the Greek are exactly the same as in Hebrews 1:8.

In dealing with this Scripture, Manalo's tract says "there is no 'O'" in the Greek. The Greek vocative case (not some separate word) means "O" when a person is addressed. It is true that there is an emphatic particle which is used with the vocative, but it really adds nothing to the force of the address. In Hebrews 1:8, the noun with the article is correctly rendered as a vocative - "O God."

Sometimes unbelievers in the Deity of Christ will try to make a predicate out of "God" and read it as, "God is thy throne." But, the Greek does not read this way. The rule in Greek is that if one noun is the subject and another the predicate, the subject will have the definite article, but not the predicate noun. This is the construction in John 1:1 - (ho logos en theos). Here, ho ("the") is the article and occurs only before the subject; "the word was God." In Hebrews 1:8, both nouns have the article: ho thronos sou ho theos, "the thronos of you, O God." The last noun is not then a predicate ("thy throne is God"); it must be a vocative of address, addressing the Son as "God." Let the reader also look in the Old Testament in

Psalms 45:6 which is being quoted in Hebrews 1:8. There, also, he will find that the vocative is the only reading which will make sense.

Thus, Hebrews 1:8 is another place where the Bible addresses THE SON AS GOD!

7. Jesus Christ is called "THE TRUE GOD" by the Apostle John.

"And we know that the Son of God is come, and hath given us an understanding, that we (may) know him that is true, and we are in him that is true, even in his Son Jesus Christ. This is the true God, and eternal life" (I John 5:20).

In John 17:3 Jesus called the Father the "only true God." But here, John gives the Son the same designation, proving that they **both partake of the same Deity**. From 1 John 5:20 one does not have to go elsewhere to find out whom John means when he says, "we are in him that is true." He himself tells us; he says, "even His Son Jesus Christ" and then this same one he calls "the true God and eternal life." In Greek, this is more apparent than in English. Both phrases "in him that is true" and "in His Son Jesus Christ" are in the same case, showing that they are in apposition with each other or mean the same thing. This is brought out in some translations by the word "even." It is thus clear that "the one who is true" refers to "the Son Jesus Christ." In turn, of this one it is said, "This is the true God and eternal life." Thus, the Scripture definitely calls Jesus Christ "God."

8. Thomas, an apostle of Jesus Christ, called the Risen Lord "MY LORD AND MY GOD!"

"Then Jesus saith to Thomas, reach hither thy finger, and see my hands; and reach hither thy hand, and put it into my side; and be not faithless but believing. Thomas answered and said, 'My Lord and My God.' Jesus said to him, Because you have seen me you, have believed" (John 20:27-29).

Thomas is sometimes called "doubting Thomas" because he did not believe when the disciples who had seen Jesus alive reported the fact to him. It must be remembered that all the disciples really doubted the first reports (Matthew 28:7; Luke 24:11,25). When Thomas saw the evidence from the body of Jesus he believed. Thus, it was the "believing" Thomas, not the doubting Thomas who cried, "My Lord and My God." The Gospel of John, which began with the assertion that

Jesus Christ was "the Word who was with God and who was God." and which had called Jesus "God only Begotten" fittingly finds its climax in a believing disciple who had demanded proof and who, when he found it, cried, "My Lord and My God."

The idea of some that Thomas was merely exclaiming in surprise and used "my Lord and "my God" as mere by-words of exclamation, as some people say, "O Lord," is unworthy of one who believes the Bible. Such use of God's name would be profanity, and would make Thomas guilty of taking God's name in vain. Jesus, in such a case, would surely have rebuked Thomas for such instead of complimenting him. Also, if Jesus had accepted Thomas' words, and, if they were not true, THESE WORDS WOULD HAVE BEEN BLASPHEMY! To call a man "God" in the sense of Divinity would be blasphemy. There is no doubt that the apostle John used the incident to climax his Gospel and demonstrate his theme that "the Word was God."

9. Jesus Christ was THE WORD WHO WAS GOD!

"In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God" (John 1:1).

NOTE WELL: This verse with which John begins his Gospel asserts several things about Jesus Christ who undoubtedly is "the Word" (the logos). First, it asserts that He was in the beginning, thus affirming His eternity. This alone would intimate that he was God, for only God is eternal. But, it further asserts that in that beginning the word was WITH God. The Greek here is the preposition pros. It means that they were "face to face" with each other. This shows that there were two persons, for one person cannot be "face to face" with himself. But, furthermore, it flatly asserts "The word WAS GOD." Despite many attempts to get around it, this is the correct and literal translation. As noted under point 6 above in discussing Hebrews 1:8, when two nouns form a subject and predicate with a copulative or linking verb between, the subject noun will have the article and the predicate noun will not. This verse follows the rule and this is the reason that the noun "God" does not have the article. "The Word was God." Compare "Thy word is truth" in John 17:17. There also, the first noun, the subject, has the article, but the predicate noun, "truth" does not.

Various attempts to escape are used by unbelievers to avoid this clear declaration of Scripture. The Jehovah's Witnesses argue that the word theos means

"God" (Jehovah) ONLY where it has the article. Otherwise, it means something indefinite - "a god." In the first place, THIS IS NOT TRUE! The noun in Greek may be definite WITH or WITHOUT the article. There are hundreds of places in the New Testament where theos without the article refers to the One Deity,

Consider for example, "The one who anointed us is God" (II Corinthians 1:21). The construction is exactly the same as in John 1:1. "God" in Greek has no article. Why then did they not translate it, "The one anointing us was a god?" A second consideration is that "the word was a god" is a false doctrine. It would mean that there are many gods and Jesus Christ is only one of them! This, of course, is polytheism. This is what the Greek and Roman pagans believed about the gods: "there are gods many and lords many" (I Corinthians 8:5). Thus, in order to escape the Deity of the Lord Jesus Christ, some professing Christians make Jesus merely "a" god. This, of course, would still make him a Deity and would not deny that he belonged to the Godhead, but to a polytheistic one! The third thing is that in the Greek language, there is no "a." The word "a" before a noun is called the indefinite article, and like Latin, Greek has no such word. The noun may or may not be indefinite and should be translated as an indefinite only where the context demands it. It clearly does not in John 1:1, because "the Word was God" makes perfect sense and was what John wrote.

Nor does it help with Moffatt to translate "the word was divine." As has been pointed out, Moffatt was a modernist and his translation is not to be trusted, especially on the point of the Deity of Christ where he went to all pains to avoid it. The word "divine" in English is an adjective, but the word "theos" in Greek is a noun. Why resort to rendering the Greek noun as an adjective? There is no reason except the futile attempt to get away from calling Jesus "God." This would be equivalent to translating the word logos or "Word" by its adjective form "rational" and asserting "Jesus was rational" instead of "Jesus was the Word." Even this attempt really does not avoid the difficulty for the unbeliever. "Divine" in its literal sense means "a divine being." or "having the quality of Deity." The truth is that this would still leave Jesus Christ as Deity, and neither Moffatt nor these false teachers believe that Jesus Christ was "Divine" in the real sense of the word.

The passage is well put by the New English Version: "What God was, the Word was." Those who deny it have repudiated what the inspired apostle wrote and should be labelled what they are -- false teachers.

10. **Jesus Christ is called "OUR GOD AND SAVIOR!"**

"Simon Peter.... to them who have obtained a like precious faith with us in the righteousness of **our God and Savior Jesus Christ**" (II Peter 1:1).

"Looking for the blessed hope and appearing of the glory of the great **God and our Savior Jesus Christ**" (Titus 2:13).

NOTE WELL: In both these passages there is only one article ("the") used with two different nouns. The rule in Greek governing this construction is called the Granville Sharp rule, which is stated as follows:

" When the copulative kai ("and") connects two nouns of the same case, if the article "ho" ("the") or any of its cases precedes the first of the said nouns or participles and is not repeated before the second noun or participle, the latter always relates to the same person that is expressed or described by the first noun or participle; that is, it denotes a farther description of the first-named person."

(Quoted from Dana and Mantey, A Manual Grammar of the Greek New Testament)

In both II Peter 1:1 and Titus 2:13, "God and Savior" are connected by "and" and have only one article preceding the first noun. In both instances, therefore, "God" and "Savior" refer to the same person Jesus Christ. Compare, for example, other sentences which are comparable; "of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ" (II Peter 2:20) where "Lord" and "Savior" both undoubtedly refer to the same person. But, this sentence is EXACTLY PARALLEL! So, in the Scriptures involved (II Peter 1:1 and Titus 2:13), Jesus is described as both "God" and "Savior."

In order for the reader to see this plainly, let him compare other verses in Peter:

II Peter 1:11, "The kingdom of the Lord of us and Savior Jesus Christ"

II Peter 2:20, "The knowledge of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ."

II Peter 3:2, "The commandment of the Lord and Savior."

II Peter 3:18, "The knowledge of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ."

II Peter 1:1, "In the righteousness of our God and Savior Jesus Christ".

Notice that the construction in these verses is the same! In each case the two nouns refer to the same person. It is dangerous to try to evade and change the word of God. Here there is no doubt that Jesus Christ is "our God and Savior."

11. The Divine Name of God, "JEHOVAH," is freely applied in the Scriptures to Jesus Christ.

God has many names. He revealed Himself to the fathers as "God Almighty." But, to Moses and to Israel he revealed Himself by a name which declares His eternal nature and being -- Yahweh or Jehovah.

"I am Yahweh (Jehovah). I appeared to Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob as God Almighty, but I never made myself known to them as Yahweh (Jehovah) (Exodus 6:2, 3).

The spelling "Jehovah" is the result of putting the vowels of the Hebrew word Adonah, the word for "Lord," with the four letters of the Hebrew YHWH which is probably to be vocalized as "Yahweh." This same name is translated in the Greek version of the Old Testament (the Septuagint Version) by the word LORD. The Greek form for this is "*kurios*" ("Lord"). This was the form of this divine name read by Jesus, the apostles, and the Jews of the first century in their Greek Bible. It is indicated in most English Versions by small caps: "Lord."

In numerous passages in the Old Testament, this divine name (Yahweh -- Jehovah -- LORD) is used of passages which in the New Testament are clearly shown to apply literally to our LORD JESUS CHRIST! This is a good way to show that, by the inspired writers, Jesus was considered "God," because he was entitled to wear the divine name of God. Consider the following:

"A voice crying in the wilderness, prepare ye the way of Yahweh (Jehovah, Greek, "the Lord") make his paths straight" (Isaiah 40:3).

That this passage refers to the way prepared for JESUS CHRIST by John the Baptist is well known from the New Testament. John quoted the passage and applied it to himself as the one preparing the way for "the one who was before me, whom (he says) I knew not until He came to be baptized" (Matthew 3:3; Mark 1:3; John 1:23, 31).

Examine one other example:

"O taste and see that Yahweh (Jehovah, Greek "the Lord") is gracious" (Psalm 34:8).

That this passage refers to Jesus Christ as Jehovah is plain from I Peter 2:3 where it is applied to the Lord Jesus Christ: "to whom coming as a living stone, rejected by men but to God, elect and precious, ye are built a spiritual house...." (I Peter 2:4, 5).

This use of God's name Jehovah to designate Jesus Christ occurs dozens of times in the Bible. In fact, nearly every time the Christ is called "Lord" in the New Testament, where the reference is to the Old Testament, the word LORD represents the Hebrew "Jehovah." The Jehovah's Witnesses recognize this by insisting that in all these passages where Lord represents the Hebrew "Yahweh," it should be translated (even in the New Testament where the Greek has "Lord") by the word "Jehovah." And, even in the face of this, these false teachers deny the Deity of Jesus Christ. They insist that the name of Deity be applied to Him and yet they reject His Deity!

This is specific proof that Jesus Christ is God: He is referred to as "Jehovah."

12. **The FULLNESS OF DEITY or the GODHEAD dwelt bodily in Jesus Christ.**

"Take heed lest there shall be anyone that maketh spoil of you through his philosophy and vain deceit, after the tradition of men, after the rudiments of the world and not after Christ: for in him dwelleth all the fullness of the Godhead bodily" (Colossians 2:8-9).

The best Greek lexicon. Arndt and Gingrich's translation of Baur, renders this passage, "in him the whole fullness of Deity dwells bodily." What the passage says is that Deity or Godhead, and not merely a part, but the "whole fullness," dwells in Jesus Christ. There are two meanings which have been suggested for the word "bodily." The first is that it refers to the time when the Son of God had a body, that is, when he was in human form. Warfield adopts this meaning:

"The very Deity of God, that which makes God, God, in all its completeness, has its completeness, has its permanent home in our Lord, and that in a "bodily fashion," that is, it is in Him clothed with a body"

(International Standard Bible Encyclopedia, p. 2341)

The second possible meaning is that "bodily" means "actually" or "in reality." In this sense, it would be opposed to "shadow" in Colossians 2:17. There, the

former things like meat, drink, or the Sabbaths, are called "the shadow" in opposition to the "body" which is of Christ. This would mean that the full Deity dwells "actually" or "really" in Jesus Christ. Either way, whether the Deity is said to dwell in Jesus in "bodily form" or is said to dwell in him "really or "actually," the truth is established that the full Deity of Godhead belongs to Jesus Christ. It would be hard to find a passage which more plainly teaches the Deity of Jesus Christ than this one which affirms that "Deity dwells bodily or actually in him." Dear reader, reflect on the fact that each of the above twelve passages teaches that Jesus Christ is Deity or God. And, in the face of all this, some would deny that the Christ is God! The false teachers who deny the Lord will bring upon themselves swift destruction (II Peter 2:1- 3).

JESUS CHRIST SHARES THE VERY NATURE AND CHARACTERISTICS OF GOD

In this section of this tract, evidence will be presented which shows that, with reference to the Deity of Jesus Christ, He is regarded as having the **CHARACTERISTICS OF DEITY.**

Jesus claimed that he came to earth to become man, coming "from the Father's side" (John 8:42; 17:8). "I came out from the Father, and am come into the world" (John 16:28). Furthermore, He claimed, "I and the Father are one" (John 10:30). In harmony with these claims, Jesus asserted His likeness in all the qualities of character to the Father, "He that hath seen me hath seen the Father" (John 14:9).

The Jews understood well that by such claims Jesus was claiming Deity: "And on account of this the Jews sought all the more to kill him, because he not only broke the Sabbath, but also called God his Father, making himself equal with God" (John 5:18). It is too bad that modern unbelievers were not there to CORRECT THE JEWS who saw that He claimed Deity. Perhaps then, the Jews would not have killed him!

Hebrews 1:3 declares that the Son is the "brightness of God's glory and the express image of his person." while he is also called "the image of the invisible God" (Colossians 1:15). With all this, we are prepared to understand why all the activities and characteristics of God are ascribed to Jesus Christ the Lord.

Consider the following, some of which are repeated from our previous discussion:

1. **He is Creator of all things** (John 1:3; Hebrews 1:2; Colossians 1:16)
2. **He upholds the world and all in it by His power** . (Hebrews 1:3)
3. **He exercised the Divine power (which only God can exercise) to forgive sins** (Mark 2:5-7; Luke 7:48-50)
4. **He has the Divine responsibility to judge the world** (Acts 17:31)
5. **Omniscience** (one of the principal characteristics of God) was His, that is, He had divine knowledge (John 11:11-14; 2:25; Note Peter in John 21:17). "Lord, you know everything")
6. He is **omnipotent** (all powerful) (Matthew 28:18; 1 Corinthians 15:25). Indeed He is called "Mighty God" (Isaiah 9:6). Consider His miracles!
7. Like God, He asserts his **omnipresence**, that He will be **NEAR ALL** in every place (Matthew 18:20; 28:20)
8. **Divine perfection, freedom from all sin and error**, are ascribed to Him (I Peter 2:22; John 8:46; II Corinthians 5:21; Hebrews 4:15; 7:26; I John 3:5)
9. **Jesus was not only worshipped by men** (Matthew 14:33; 28:9, 17), but the inspired apostles taught that worship should be accorded to Him because of his worthiness to receive such (I Corinthians 1:2; Hebrews 1:6; Revelation 1: 5-6: 5:12-13)
10. **He is to have the Pre-eminence** (Supremacy) in all things (Colossians 1:18)

THE PURPOSE OF THE INCARNATION

One point that needs to be emphasized is that there is a REASON why God became man. The author of the Book of Hebrews was careful to point out that it was "fitting" or "becoming" of Deity to become man. No doubt, this was to correct the impression of the Jews, who had expected another kind of Messiah, that it was not unbecoming of God to become man and be made "lower than angels" (Hebrews 2:9-15).

That purpose is stated in several ways. First, by suffering in all points as a man, He could qualify as a High Priest (Hebrews 5:1-7), and so be able as our High Priest to assist them that have need (Hebrews 2:17-18; 4:14-16). Only by dying as a man could He destroy the power of the devil over man through the fear of death (Hebrews 2:14-18). But, most important, only by dying as the sinless Son of God could He redeem man from sins. Neither the blood of animal sacrifices or of man himself could atone for our sins (Hebrews 10:1-10). Since such sacrifices were not sufficient, it was necessary that a "body" be prepared for God himself to visit the earth and die for man (Hebrews 10:5).

Let it be noted that to deny the Deity of Jesus Christ destroys the basis on which He is the Savior of mankind. It was by virtue of the fact that the eternal Word was manifested (I John 1:1-2), and as a man shed His blood, that we are forgiven of our sins (I John 1:7-9). Hence, those who deny the Deity of Jesus Christ take away His power to save them.

QUESTIONS AND OBJECTIONS ANSWERED

1. Question: If Jesus Christ, the Son, and also the Holy Spirit, are rightly called "God," does not this make three Gods ("One plus one plus one equals three")?

ANSWER: It would, if "God" were always used in the sense of "persons" or "individuals." In other words, if God is always equated with "father," and we understand that when the Bible says "Jehovah thy God is one God," it always means one person (the Father), then to believe in another person, the Son, as God, would mean a second person, and a different God. But, it is obvious that this is NOT what the Bible means by "One God." The word "God" sometimes does not mean "God the Father" specifically, but "Deity" or "Godhead" (Colossians 2:9; Acts 17:29). Here, "God" means that which is Divine, as opposed to what is human. We can see a parallel here. There is one humanity, for "God hath made of one every nation of men to dwell on the face of the earth" (Acts 17:26). When we affirm the "oneness" of the human race, we are not affirming that there is only one person in the human race. There are many! It would be possible, however, to think of different species of human beings inhabiting different planets. So, it would be possible to think of different gods or deities, of different power, of different being, and character, existing and competing for the affection and devotion of men. Such was the picture of ancient Hebrew and Greek and Roman civilizations. In contrast to this, Jehovah revealed Himself as one Deity, a single Godhead, rather than many. That such a Deity exists in three personalities, while in some ways a mystery, is nevertheless the

mystery of God's revelation of Himself. But these three persons are "equal," being of the same image and character and perfection. All are equally "God," so that they make up one Deity or Godhead. This is no more difficult to conceive than it is to understand how two people, HUSBAND AND WIFE, can become ONE! Or, how many people, joined to the Lord by the Holy Spirit (I Corinthians 6:16), can be "ONE BODY" (Ephesians 4:4).

2. Question: Is it not true that the Christian world never taught that Jesus was God until the Council of Nicea asserted it against Arius in 325 A. D.?

ANSWER: **No, this is not true.** We have already shown that the New Testament writers addressed Jesus as God. We have many examples of early Christian writers (just after the New Testament era) referring to JESUS AS GOD. Ignatius, a martyr put to death under Trajan (died 117 A. D.), frequently called Jesus God. In the letter to the Trallians (7:1), he spoke of "the God Jesus Christ." In his epistle to the Smyrnians, (10:1), he spoke of the "Christ God," and in his epistle to the Ephesians (7:2), he spoke of Jesus as "the one becoming God in the flesh." This is just one of many examples which could be given. Yet, in the face of this, the followers of Manalo in their tract assert that Jesus was never called God until 325 A. D.!

3. Question: Does not the Bible teach that Jesus is a "creature" or the "firstborn of God's creation?"

ANSWER: The Bible does call Jesus the "firstborn of all creation" in Colossians 1:15. In another passage (Revelation 3:14), Jesus Christ is called "the beginning of the creation of God." The term "firstborn" is sometimes used literally of the eldest male child of a father. This son received a double portion of the father's goods and became the leader of the clan. From this, the word acquired the meaning of the one who is pre-eminent, without any idea of the person so designated being the first-born son. Proof of this is seen in Psalms 89:27 where the Lord speaks of "My servant David" (See Psalm 89:3,20), and says, "I will make him my FIRSTBORN, higher than the kings of the earth." David here is considered as a type of the ideal king to come, but he is literally called God's firstborn. In what sense was David so called? Surely not in any literal sense, for David was no different as a child of God than millions of Jews. Hence, that Jesus is the "firstborn of all creation" simply means that he is PRE-EMINENT (Supreme) among, or over, all the creation of God.

The other passage which speaks of Jesus as the "beginning of the creation" uses

the word "arche" in Greek. Instead of "beginning," the word more commonly means the "chief," "prince," or "ruler" over the creation. This is most certainly its meaning here. If Jesus himself created "all things" (Colossians 1:16), then he could not be a created thing Himself. If he is, then there is something which He did not create -- Himself. But, this plainly contradicts the Scriptures which affirm that He did create "all things."

4. Question: Is not Jesus Christ the wisdom of God (I Corinthians 1:30), and was not wisdom made or "brought forth" as a part of God's creation (Proverbs 8:24, etc.)?

ANSWER: Wisdom in Proverbs 8-9 is probably merely a personification of one of the characteristics of God. Notice that in the passage Wisdom is a woman, and of her it is said, "Doth not wisdom cry. . . She crieth in the gates" (Proverbs 8:1). Compare this to the Statue of Liberty in the United States where liberty is pictured as a Woman. Since Wisdom is personified as a characteristic of God, it is not surprising that the Son who is also Deity, should likewise be the embodiment of Wisdom. Notice that He is not only the "wisdom of God," but also he is "God's righteousness, sanctification, and redemption" (I Corinthians 1:30). We see the same virtues that the Father has in the Son also, for "I and the Father are one" (John 10:30), and "He that hath seen me hath seen the Father" (John 14:9).

BUT, NOTE WELL: If Proverbs 8:22-36 is a foreshadowing of Christ as the Wisdom of God (as some claim), this does not prove that He was merely a characteristic of God before he became man, or that He is a created thing. In fact, Proverbs 8:11-22 shows that wisdom is ETERNAL! Just as in John 1:1, 14, the Word was with God in the beginning and WAS GOD, and then became flesh, so wisdom says, "The Lord possessed me in the beginning of His ways. . . I was set up from everlasting, from the beginning or ever the earth was" (Proverbs 8:22-23). That wisdom was "brought forth" or "set up" does not mean that he was created, or else there was a time when wisdom did not exist and was not with God, so there was a time when God was unwise. "To bring something forth" may only mean to "show or "demonstrate" it. If one brings forth a knife from his pocket, that does not mean that he brings it into existence at that time. Something must already be there before it can be set up or brought forth. So, a Wisdom is eternal. Hence, we conclude that if Wisdom here is not a personification of a characteristic of God which Jesus also possessed, but is a designation of the Son Himself, then it refers to the eternal Son

who was in the beginning with the Father, and was demonstrated or brought forth and revealed in His activity as God's agent in creation.

CONCLUSION

Dear reader, Jesus Christ is the Lord of Glory (James 2:1), He is the Son of God, not in the sense in which all men may become sons of God as His redeemed children (I John 3:1-3), but in the sense that He was God revealed in human form by being begotten by the Holy Spirit in the womb of Mary (Luke 1:35). Jesus affirmed that if we do not believe His claim to be this Son of God, "we shall die in our sins and where I am ye can never come" (John 8:24). But, if we believe that He is the Son of God and obey His word we will be saved, for, "He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved" (Mark 16:16).

Jesus Christ established HIS church. He said, "Upon this rock I shall build my church and the gates of Hades shall not prevail against it" (Matthew 16:18). God's truth is the faith which was "once for all time delivered to the saints" (Jude 3). Jesus' word never shall pass away (I Peter 1:25). Though there are tendencies to apostasy in the Lord's church, and there was a falling away, yet it is the word of God which is the seed of the kingdom (Mark 4:14),

The church of Jesus Christ for which He died is not a man-made sect. When the Gospel of Jesus Christ is preached, when men obey it, and when they worship God through Jesus Christ in local congregations, or churches of Christ (Romans 16:16), there the New Testament church is reproduced. There are hundreds of such churches located in the Philippines and around the world. Jesus' church, His body, stands steadfast, founded upon the truth, "Thou art Jesus, the Christ, the Son of the Living God." "Nevertheless, the firm foundation of God standeth sure, having this seal, The Lord knows them that are His" (II Timothy 2:19). The Lord calls you into His house, away from the denial of His Lordship and Deity, and away from human denominations. **"Come let us reason together!"**