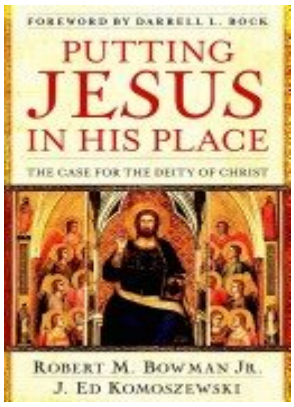
Jesus Is God: 5 Powerful Indicators That Reveal His Divine H.A.N.D.S

Don Closson explains the five lines of evidence that Jesus is God from the book Putting Jesus in His Place.

Jesus Shares the *Honor* Given to God



Defending the deity of Christ can be a source of anxiety for some believers. Perhaps it is because our defense often consists only of a couple of proof texts, which are quickly challenged by Jehovah's Witnesses and others. Even worse, some Christians themselves are troubled by passages that seem to teach that Jesus is something less than God, that He is inferior to the Father in some significant way. They are fine with Jesus being the suffering servant, the Messiah who died for our sins, but less sure of His role in creation or as a member of the triune everlasting "I Am" of the Old Testament.



A recent book by Robert Bowman and Ed Komoszewski titled *Putting Jesus in His Place* is a great confidence builder for those wrestling with this key doctrine. The book offers five lines of evidence with deep roots in the biblical material. The book is organized around the acronym H.A.N.D.S. It argues that the New Testament teaches that Jesus deserves the *honors* only due to God, He shares the *attributes* that only God possesses, He is given *names* that can only be given to God, He performs *deeds* that only God can perform, and finally, He possesses a *seat* on the throne of God.

Let's look at the first line of evidence for the deity of

Christ: Jesus deserves the honor that should only be given to God. To honor someone is to acknowledge "their place in the scheme of things—to speak about them and to behave toward them in a manner appropriate to their status and position."{1} As creator of the universe, God deserves the highest level of honor and glory, since nothing can claim a higher degree of status or position. As a result, the Old Testament teaches that only God deserves the honor and glory that is part of human worship, and He will not share this honor with anything else. In Isaiah 42, God declares that "I am the LORD; that is my name! I will not give my glory to another or my praise to idols" (Isaiah 42:8).

So how does Jesus fit into this picture? In John 5, Jesus declares that the Father has entrusted judgment to the Son so that "all may honor the Son just as they honor the Father." He adds that "He who does not honor the Son does not honor the Father" (John 5:22, 23). Referring to his pre-existence with the Father before creation, Jesus says, "And now, Father, glorify me in your presence with the glory I had with you before the world began" (John 17:5). In these passages, Jesus is claiming the right to receive the same honor and glory due to the Father; in effect, He is claiming to be God in the same way that the Father is God.

Jesus Shares the *Attributes* of God

If Jesus is honored in the New Testament in a manner reserved only for God, it follows that one who is given the honor and glory reserved for God is also worthy of worship. So it's not surprising that the book of Hebrews tells us that Jesus is to be worshipped by the angels or that in Matthew's Gospel the apostles worshipped him when he came to them walking on water (Hebrews 1:6; Matthew 14:33). Perhaps the most stirring image of Jesus being worshipped is in Revelation where every creature in heaven and on earth sing praises to the Father and to the Lamb, giving them both honor and glory and reporting

that the four living creatures and the elders fell down and worshipped Him (Revelation 5:13-14).

The New Testament also teaches that Jesus shares divine attributes that only God possesses. When this claim is made, Muslims, Jehovah's Witnesses, and others protest by pointing out that Jesus exhibited the very human attributes of hunger, fatigue, and pain. This valid observation does not conflict with the traditional Christian teaching that Jesus possessed two essential natures—one divine and one human. There is no reason to assume that one set of attributes cancels out the other. It should be added that although Jesus shares a divine nature with the Father, He does not share the same properties within the Godhead or trinity. The Father sent Jesus into the world; Jesus died on the cross and assumed the role of our permanent high priest.

Jesus clearly states in John 14 that to see him is to see the Father; both are equally God (John 14:10). In Colossians, Paul goes to great lengths to argue that all of God's divine attributes are present in Christ. He writes that Jesus is "the image of the invisible God" and that ". . .God was pleased to have all his fullness dwell in him (Colossians 1:15, 19). He summarizes the same idea by adding that "in Christ all the fullness of the Deity lives in bodily form" (Colossians 2:9). The writer of Hebrews concurs in the opening paragraph of that book, saying that "the Son is the radiance of God's glory and the exact representation of his being" (Hebrews 1:3).

Jesus shares the Father's attribute of pre-existing the created universe and His own physical incarnation. John's Gospel tells us that Jesus was with the Father in the beginning when the universe was created, and Paul adds that Jesus is before all things (John 1:1-3; Colossians 1:16-18). In other words, Jesus has always existed and is unchanging. He has been given all authority on heaven and earth (Matt. 28:18). He deserves the honor, praise, glory, and worship of all creation.

Jesus Shares the *Names* Given to God

Those who question the deity of Christ complain that the New Testament just doesn't teach it, that it doesn't come right out and say that Jesus is God. Is this really the case?

The New Testament uses two key words for God: *theos*, the general Greek word for deity, and *kurios,* usually translated as "lord." *Theos* is the word most often used to designate God the Father and is also used a number of times in direct reference to Jesus, especially in the Gospel of John. John begins his book with the familiar proclamation that Jesus, the Word, was with God (*theos*) in the beginning, and that the Word (Jesus) was God (*theos*). Later in the chapter, John adds that "No one has ever seen God, but God (*theos*) the One and Only, who at the Father's side, has made him known" (John 1:18). Jesus, the Word, is described by John as being with God in verse one, and at the Father's side in verse eighteen, and in both cases is given the title *theos* or God.

The Gospel John also contains the confession by Thomas that Jesus is his Lord (*kurios*), and God (*theos*). John makes sure that we understand that Thomas was talking about Jesus by writing "Thomas said to Him," that is, to Jesus, "'My Lord and my God.'"

Paul uses *theos* in reference to Jesus a number of times. In Romans 9:5 he describes Jesus as "Christ, who is God (*theos*) over all." And in Titus he writes that we are waiting for our "blessed hope—the glorious appearing of our great God (*theos*) and Savior, Jesus Christ (2:13)." Peter portrays himself as a servant of Christ who is writing to those through whom "the righteousness of our God (*theos*) and Savior Jesus Christ have received a faith as precious as ours (2 Peter1:1)."

All four gospels begin with John the Baptist's ministry of "preparing the way of the Lord" as fulfillment of Isaiah's prophecy in Isaiah 40:3. The prophet wrote, "In the desert

prepare the way for the LORD; make straight in the wilderness a highway for our God." The Hebrew word translated LORD in this verse is the unspoken special word for God used by the Jews consisting of four consonants called the *tetragrammaton*. The New Testament Gospels are applying the word Lord to Jesus in the same way that the Old Testament referred to Yahweh as LORD.

Jesus Does the *Deeds* that Only God Can Do

It was universally recognized by the Jews of Jesus' day that "God created the heavens and the earth (Genesis 1:1; cf. Isaiah 37:16)." So it might be surprising to some that the New Testament also gives Jesus credit for creation. Paul teaches in Colossians that Jesus created "all things." To make sure that no one misunderstands his point, he adds that "all things" includes "things in heaven and on earth, visible and invisible, whether thrones or powers or rulers or authorities; all things were created by him and for him. He is before all things, and in him all things hold together" (Colossians 1:16-17). Paul wanted to be clear: Jesus is the creator God of the universe.

While Jesus' role in creation is enough to establish his divine nature, He also exhibited supernatural divine power during His ministry on earth. Unlike the Old Testament prophets and New Testament apostles, Jesus did not have to petition a higher power to heal or cast out demons. He had inherent divine power to accomplish his will. Other than giving thanks, Jesus did not pray before performing miracles. In fact, the apostles reported that some demons obeyed them only when they invoked Jesus' name. There were a number of occasions when Jesus realized that power had gone out from Him even without His intention to heal (Luke 6:19; Mark 5:30; Luke 8:46).

Jesus not only healed and cast out demons, but also had direct power over nature. When the disciples were frightened on a

boat, He “rebuked the winds and the waves, and it was completely calm” (Matthew 8:26). When thousands were following him without food, He fed them miraculously (Matthew 14:20-21).

The New Testament teaching that salvation is possible through Jesus Christ alone would also have serious implications for Jewish readers. The Old Testament teaches that God is the only source of salvation. For instance, Psalm 62 teaches that “My soul finds rest in God alone; my salvation comes from Him. He alone is my rock and my salvation.” How then does one explain the numerous references claiming Jesus to be the source of salvation? Matthew points out that Mary will call her son Jesus because he will save his people from their sins (Matthew 1:21). Jesus declares of himself that “God did not send his Son into the world to condemn the world, but to save the world through Him (Jn. 3:17).” There are also instances where Jesus directly forgives the sins of individuals, thus attracting hostile attention from the Jews (Luke 7:47-49; Mark 2:5-7).

The Psalmist writes that it is the Lord God “who will redeem Israel from all its iniquities” and that “Salvation belongs to the Lord.” John summarizes nicely when he writes, “Salvation belongs to our God who is seated on the throne, and to the Lamb!”

Jesus Has a *Seat* on God’s Throne

Our last line of argument for the deity of Jesus Christ refers to his claim to have a place on the very throne of God. From this throne, Jesus rules over creation and will judge all of humanity. He literally possesses all authority to rule.

Jesus made this claim clear during His questioning by the high priest Caiaphas the night of his capture. Caiaphas asked him, “Are you the Christ, the Son of the Blessed One?” (Mark 14:61). If Jesus wasn’t God, this would have been a great opportunity for Him to clear up any misconceptions. But instead of denying His divinity, Jesus says “I am,” admitting

to being God's unique Son, and goes on to say, "you will see the Son of Man sitting at the right hand of the Mighty One and coming on the clouds of heaven" (Mark 14:62). The high priest's response was dramatic; he tore his clothes and declared that those present had heard blasphemy from the lips of Jesus. They understood that Jesus was making a direct claim to being God, for only God could sit on the throne of the mighty one.

In His response to the high priest, Jesus draws from a number of Old Testament passages. The book of Daniel describes this "Son of Man" as having an everlasting dominion that will never be destroyed (Daniel 7:13-14). The passage adds that the Son of Man has been given authority to rule over all people and nations, and that men of every language will worship him. He is also described as coming with the clouds of heaven, imagery that is used a number of times in the Old Testament to indicate divine presence. Exodus describes a pillar of cloud that designated God's proximity to the Jews, while the book of Psalms and the prophet Isaiah both picture God riding on clouds in the heavens (Psalm 104:3; Isaiah 19:1). The point here is that Jesus is connecting Himself to this "Son of Man" who will sit at the right hand of the Father, have everlasting dominion and authority, and will be worshipped by all men. This kind of language can only be used to describe God.

The New Testament makes it clear that there is nothing not under the authority and power of Jesus. John writes that the Father put all things under His power (John 13:3). Paul adds that the Father seated Jesus at His right hand in the heavenly realms, far above all rule and authority and power and dominion and above every name that is named (Ephesians 1:20-21). Jesus sits on the judgment seat, He sent the Holy Spirit, He forgives sinners, and is our perfect eternal high priest (2 Corinthians 5:10; Acts 2:33; 7:59-60; Hebrews 7-10).

The New Testament provides multiple lines of evidence to make the case that Jesus is God. The only question remaining is

whether or not we will worship him as a full member of the triune Godhead, the only eternal, self-existing, creator God of the universe.

Note

1. Robert M. Bowman and J. Ed Komoszewski, *Putting Jesus In His Place* (Grand Rapids: Kregel, 2007), 31.

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The Deity of Christ

The belief that Jesus was and is God has always been a non-negotiable for Christianity. Don Closson explains that this belief is based on Jesus' own words as well as the teachings of the early church.

 *This article is also available in Spanish.*

I recently received a letter from someone who argues that there is only one God, and that He is called many names and worshiped by many different people who hold to many different faiths. This kind of thinking about God is common today, but its popularity does not reduce the intellectual problems that may accompany it. For instance, does this notion of god include the god of the Aztecs who required child sacrifice? What about the warrior gods of Norse mythology: Odin, Thor, and Loki? How does the Mormon belief that we can all become Gods if we join their organization and conform to their system of good works fit into this theological framework? Even John Hick, an influential religious pluralist, believes that only some of the world's great religions qualify as having a valid view of God. Islam, Christianity, Judaism, Buddhism, and

Hinduism are valid, but Satanism and the religions of the Waco, Texas, variety are not. Belief that all religious systems worship one God raises difficult questions when we see how different groups portray God and seek to describe how we are to relate to Him.

The issue becomes even more acute when one religious tradition claims that God took on flesh becoming a man and walked on the earth. The Christian tradition has claimed for almost two thousand years that God did just that. The Gospel of John proclaims that, “The Word became flesh and made his dwelling among us. We have seen his glory, the glory of the One and Only, who came from the Father, full of grace and truth.” John is, of course, talking about Jesus, and this claim presents an interesting challenge for a religious pluralist. If what John and the rest of the New Testament writers claim about Jesus is true, then we literally have God in the flesh walking with and teaching a small band of disciples. If Jesus was God incarnate as He walked the earth, we have a first hand account of what God is like in the biblical record. Truth claims about God that counter those given in the Bible must then be discounted. In other words, if Jesus was God in the flesh during His time on earth, other religious texts or traditions are wrong when they teach about God or about knowing God in ways that contradict the biblical record.

In this essay we will consider the evidence for the deity of Christ. Christianity’s truth claims are dependent on this central teaching, and once accepted, this claim reduces greatly the viability of religious pluralism, of treating all religious beliefs as equally true. For if God truly became flesh and spoke directly to His disciples about such things as sin, redemption, a final judgment, false religions and true worship, then we have the God of the universe expressing intolerance towards other religious claims- -specifically claims that discount the reality of sin and remove the need for redemption or the reality of a final judgment. Some might

not agree with God's religious intolerance, but then again, disagreeing with God is what the Bible calls sin.

Rather than begin with a response to attacks on Christ's deity by modern critics like the Jesus Seminar or New Age gnostics, our discussion will begin with Jesus' own self-consciousness, in other words, what did Jesus say and think about himself. From there we will consider the teachings of the Apostles and the early church. My goal is to establish that from its inception, Christianity has taught and believed that Jesus was God in the flesh, and that this belief was the result of the very words that Jesus spoke concerning His own essence.

Christ's Self-Perception

As we begin to examine evidence that supports the claim that Jesus Christ is God in the flesh or God incarnate, a good starting point is Jesus' own self concept. It must first be admitted that Jesus never defines His place in the Trinity in theological language. However, He made many statements about himself that would be not only inappropriate, but blasphemous if He was not God in the flesh. It is important to remember that Jesus' life was not spent doing theology or thinking and writing about theological issues. Instead, His life was focused on relationships, first with His disciples, and then with the Jewish people. The purpose of these relationships was to engender in these people a belief in Jesus as their savior or Messiah, as their only source of salvation. Jesus told the Pharisees, the Jewish religious leaders of His day, that they would die in their sins if they did not believe that He was who He claimed to be (John 8:24). And to one Pharisee, Nicodemus, Jesus said, "For God so loved the world, that He gave His one and only Son, that whoever believes in Him shall not perish, but have eternal life" (John 3:16).

Millard Erickson, in his book *Christian Theology*, does a nice job of laying out evidence that Jesus considered himself equal in essence with God.(1) Unless He was God, it would have been

highly inappropriate for Jesus to say, as He does in Matthew 13:41, that both the angels and the kingdom are His. Elsewhere, angels are called "the angels of God" (Luke 12:8 9; 15:10) and the phrase Kingdom of God is found throughout the Scriptures. But Jesus says, "The Son of man will send **His** angels, and they will gather out of **His** kingdom all causes of sin and evildoers" (Matt. 13:41).

When the paralytic in Mark 2:5 was lowered through the roof by his friends, Jesus' first response was to say that the man's sins were forgiven. The scribes knew the implications of this statement, for only God could forgive sin. Their remarks clearly show that they understood Jesus to be exercising a divine privilege. Jesus had a wonderful opportunity to set the record straight here by denying that He had the authority to do what only God can do. Instead, His response only reinforces His claim to divinity. Jesus says, "Why do you question thus in your hearts? Which is easier, to say to the paralytic, Your sins are forgiven,' or to say, Rise, take up your pallet and walk'?" To confirm His authority to forgive sins, Jesus enabled the man to pick up his pallet and go home.

Two other areas that Jesus claimed authority over was the judging of sin and the observance of the Sabbath. Both were considered God's prerogative by the Jews. In John 5:22-23 Jesus says, "The Father judges no one, but has entrusted all judgment to the Son, that all may honor the Son just as they honor the Father." Jesus also claimed authority to change man's relationship to the Sabbath. Honoring the Sabbath is one of the Ten Commandments, and the Jews had been given strict instructions on how to observe it. In the book of Numbers, Moses is told by God to stone to death a man who collects wood on the Sabbath. However, in Matthew 12:8 Jesus says that "the Son of Man is Lord of the Sabbath."

These examples show that Jesus made claims and performed miracles that reveal a self awareness of His own divinity. In our next section, we will continue in this vein.

Christ's Self-Perception, Part 2

At this point in our discussion we will offer even more examples of Jesus' self knowledge of His essential equality with God.

A number of comments that Jesus made about His relationship with the Father would be unusual if Jesus did not consider himself equal in essence with God. In John 10:30 He says that to see Him is to see the Father. Later in John 14:7-9 He adds that to know Him is to know the Father. Jesus also claimed to have existed prior to His incarnation on earth. In John 8:58 He says, "Truly, truly, I say to you, before Abraham was, I am." Some believe that the words used here by Jesus constitute His strongest claim to deity. According to the *Expositors Bible Commentary* this passage might more literally be translated, "Before Abraham came into being, I continuously existed." The Jews recognized the phrase "I am" as one referring to God because God used it (1) to describe himself when He commissioned Moses to demand the release of His people from Pharaoh (Exodus 3:14), and (2) to identifyhimself in the theistic proclamations in the second half of Isaiah. Jesus also declares that His work is coterminous with the Father. He proclaims that "If a man loves me, he will keep my word, and my Father will love him, and we will come to him and make our home with him" (John 14:23). The Jews hearing Jesus understood the nature of these claims. After His comment about pre-existing Abraham, they immediately picked up stones to kill Him for blasphemy because they understood that He had declared himself God.

In Jesus' trial He makes a clear declaration of who He is. The Jews argued before Pilate in John 19:7, "We have a law, and according to that law he must die, because he claimed to be the Son of God." Matthew 26 records that at Jesus' trial, the high priest tells Jesus, "I charge you under oath by the living God: Tell us if you are the Christ, the Son of

God.”Jesus replies, “You have said it yourself, . . . But I say to all of you: In the future you will see the Son of Man sitting at the right hand of the Mighty One and coming on the clouds of heaven.” This would have been a wonderful opportunity for Jesus to save himself by clearing up any misconceptions concerning His relationship with the Father. Instead, He places himself in a position of equality and of unique power and authority. Again, the Jews understand what Jesus is saying. The high priest proclaims, “He has uttered blasphemy. Why do we still need witnesses? You have now heard his blasphemy.” He calls for a vote of the council, and they demand His death (Matt. 26:65-66).

Another indicator of how Jesus perceived himself is in His use of Old Testament Scripture and the way He made His own proclamations of truth. In a number of cases, Jesus began a sentence with “You have heard that it was said, . . . but I say to you. . . .” (Matt. 5:21-22, 27-28). Jesus was giving His words the same authority as the Scriptures. Even the prophets, when speaking for God, would begin their statements with: “The word of the Lord came to me,” but Jesus begins with: “I say to you.”

There are other indications of how Jesus saw himself. For example, Christ’s claim to have authority over life itself in John 5:21 and 11:25, and His use of the self referential “Son of God” title point to unique power and authority and His essential equality with God.

The Apostles’ Teaching

We will turn now to look at what Jesus’ followers said of Him. The Gospel of John begins with a remarkable declaration of both Christ’s deity and full humanity. “In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. He was with God in the beginning.” Later in verse fourteen John remarks that this “Word” became flesh and walked among them and points to Jesus as this “Word” become flesh. What did John

mean by this remarkable passage?

The first phrase might literally be translated: “When the beginning began, the Word was already there.” In other words, the “Word” co- existed with God and predates time and creation. The second phrase “The Word was with God” indicates both equality and distinction of identity. A more literal translation might be “face to face with God,” implying personality and relational coexistence. Some groups, like the Jehovah’s Witnesses, make a great deal of the fact that the word “God” in the third phrase “The Word was God” lacks an article. This, they argue, allows the noun God to be translated as an indefinite noun, perhaps referring to “a God” but not “the” almighty God. Actually, the lack of an article for the noun makes the case for the deity of the “Word” more clearly. The Greek phrase, *theos en ho logos* describes the nature of the “Word,” not the nature of God. The article *ho* before the word *logos* shows that the sentence describes the nature of the Word; He is of the same nature and essence as the noun in the predicate; that is, the Word is divine. It is interesting to note that verses 6, 12, 13, and 18 of the same chapter refer unambiguously to God the Father and use an anarthrous noun, i.e., a noun without the article.(2) Yet strangely the Jehovah’s Witnesses do not dispute the meaning of these passages.

The author of Hebrews writes plainly of Christ’s deity. The first chapter states that, “The Son is the radiance of God’s glory and the exact representation of His being, sustaining all things by His powerful word.” The passage also states that Jesus is not an angel nor is He just a priest. In Colossians 1:15 Paul adds that, “He is the image of the invisible God, the firstborn over all creation. For by Him all things were created: things in heaven and on earth, visible and invisible, whether thrones or powers or rulers or authorities; all things were created by Him and for Him. He is before all things, and in Him all things hold together.” Although Paul clearly

attributes godlike qualities to Jesus, the use of the word firstborn often causes confusion. The word can be a reference to priority in time or supremacy in rank. Since Jesus is described as the Creator of all things, the notion of supremacy seems more appropriate. Philippians 2:5-11 also talks of Jesus existing in the form of God. The Greek term used for form is *morphe*, denoting an outward manifestation of an inner essence.

Mention should also be made of the use by New Testament writers of the word *Lord* for Jesus. The same Greek word was used in the Greek Old Testament, the Septuagint, as the translated word for the Hebrew words Yahweh and Adonai, two special names given to God the Father. The Apostles meant to apply the highest sense of this term when referring to Jesus.

The Early Church

Thus far we have been examining the Christian claim of Christ's divinity, first considering Jesus' own self-concept and then the thoughts of those who wrote the New Testament. It is not within the scope of this essay to argue that the words attributed to Jesus by the writers of the New Testament are indeed His. Instead, we have argued that the words attributed to Jesus do claim an essential equality with God the Father. The traditional view of the Christian faith has been that God has revealed himself to us as three separate persons—Father, Son, and Holy Spirit—who shared a common essence.

Belief in Jesus' essential equality with God the Father was communicated by the Apostles to the church fathers to whom they handed the task of leading the church. Even though these early leaders often struggled with how to describe the notion of the Trinity with theological accuracy, they knew that their faith was in a person who was both man and God.

Clement of Rome is a good example of this faith. Writing to the church at Corinth Clement implies Jesus' equality with God

the Father when he says “Have we not one God, and one Christ and one Spirit of grace poured upon us.” Later, in his second letter, Clement tells his readers to “think of Jesus as of God , as the judge of the living and dead.” Clement also wrote of Jesus as the preexistent Son of God; in other words, Christ existed before He took on human flesh. Ignatius of Antioch spoke of Christ’s nature in his letter to the Ephesians, “There is only one physician, of flesh and of spirit, generate and ingenerate, God in man, life in death, Son of Mary and Son of God.” A little later, Irenaeus of Lyons (ca. A.D. 140-202.) had to stress the humanity of Christ because of Gnostic heresy that argued that Jesus was only a divine emanation. Irenaeus wrote, “There is therefore . . . one God the Father, and one Christ Jesus our Lord, who . . . gathered together all things in himself. But in every respect, too, he is man, the formation of God: and thus he took up man into himself, the invisible becoming visible, the incomprehensible being made comprehensible, the impassible becoming capable of suffering, and the Word being made man, thus summing up all things in himself” (*Against Heresies III*, 16). During the same time period, Tertullian of Carthage (ca. A.D. 155-240) wrote of Christ’s nature that “what is born in the flesh is flesh and what is born in the Spirit is spirit. Flesh does not become spirit nor spirit flesh. Evidently they can (both) be in one (person). Of these Jesus is composed, of flesh as man and of spirit as God” (*Against Praxeas*, 14). Later he added, “We see His double state, not intermixed but conjoined in one person, Jesus, God and man” (*Against Praxeas*, 27).

By A.D. 325 the church had begun to systematize Christianity’s response to various heretical views of Christ. The Nicene Creed stated, “We believe in God the Father All-sovereign, maker of heaven and earth, of all things visible and invisible; And in one Lord Jesus Christ, the only-begotten Son of God, begotten of the Father before all the ages, Light of Light, true God of true God, begotten not created, of one substance with the Father, through whom all things came into

being.”(3)

The belief in Jesus Christ being of the same essence as God the Father began with Jesus himself, was taught to His Apostles, who in turn handed down this belief to the early church Fathers and apologists. Christ’s deity is the foundation upon which the Christian faith rests.

Notes

1. Millard J. Erickson, *Christian Theology* (Grand Rapids, Mich.: Baker Book House, 1985), pp. 684-90.

2. Merrill C. Tenney, *The Expositors Bible Commentary*, vol. 9 (Grand Rapids, Mich.: Zondervan Publishing House, 1981), pp. 28-29.

3. Henry Bettenson, ed., *Documents of the Christian Church* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1967), p. 26.

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