

CHRISTOLOGY (35)

(Right #2) - Jesus Christ has the right to execute judgment. Jn. 5:22, 27; Acts 17:31; II Cor. 5:10

Jesus Christ will judge all people. He will sit on the highest and holiest governmental throne ever to exist and will determine eternal judgment for every single individual of every age. In order to do this, He must be God or this judgment is not possible.

(Right #3) - Jesus Christ has the right to give life. Jn. 1:4; 5:21, 26; 11:25-26; 14:6

Since we have already observed that Christ holds office of Creator, we know that He has the right to give physical life. It also may be observed that Jesus Christ has the right to grant spiritual life to any He desires. This prerogative of being the source of life and being able to give life, both physical and spiritual, is only a prerogative of the Living God.

Proof #5 - Jesus Christ has a unique association with God the Father and God the Holy Spirit.

- 1) Matt. 28:19 - Carefully observe the noun “name” is singular, not plural, indicating a co-equality and a singularity in identity and relationship.
- 2) John 10:30 - This passage clearly asserts that Jesus Christ is of the same essence as God the Father. The Jews clearly understood this assertion (Jn. 10:31, 33). Jesus Christ is one with Jehovah. As Ryrie says, “perfect unity in natures and actions” (Ryrie, p. 249).
- 3) II Cor. 13:14 - It is clearly demonstrated that all three members of the Trinity have a very unique association. They are all involved in the life of a believer and life of the church.
- 4) I Peter 1:2 - It is clear that all three members of the Godhead are involved in salvation—the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit.
- 5) Rev. 1:4-5 - In this text, Jesus Christ is connected to the highest possible descriptive language ascribed to the Father and the Spirit. In this particular context, the majority of the verses discuss the work of Jesus Christ. When we remember that Revelation is a prophetic book, it is obvious that the other two members of the Godhead—the Father and Holy Spirit—want Christ’s work described in great and graphic detail. This, in itself, establishes His Deity.

Every one of these passages and many others put Jesus Christ on the same level with God the Father and God the Spirit. Truth is there are passages of Scripture that put them on such a same level that it is not certain which member of the Godhead is under discussion (i.e. Rev. 21:3-7; 22:3-4). One must conclude from texts like this that Jesus Christ is God.

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Proof #6 - Jesus Christ has a divine relationship and reaction to worship.

When we examine the biblical evidence, what we clearly see is that Jesus Christ receives the same worship, honor and glory that only God receives. This is concrete evidence that Jesus Christ is God. There are six key facts to observe on this point:

(Fact #1) - Only God is to be worshipped, according to Scripture.

- 1) Exodus 34:14 - “for you shall not worship any other god, for the LORD, whose name is Jealous, is a jealous God...”
- 2) Isaiah 42:8 - “I am the LORD, that is My name; I will not give My glory to another, nor My praise to graven images.”
- 3) Rev. 22:9 - “And he said to me, “Do not do that; I am a fellow servant of yours and of your brethren the prophets and of those who heed the words of this book, worship God.”

(Fact #2) - Jesus Christ believed and taught that only God was to be worshipped.

- 1) Matt. 4:10 - “Then Jesus said to him, “Be gone Satan! For it is written you shall worship the LORD your God, and serve Him only.”

(Fact #3) - God the Father said Jesus Christ was to be worshipped.

- 1) Hebrews 1:6 - “And when He again brings the first-born into the world, He says, “And let all the angels of God worship Him.”

(Fact #4) - Jesus Christ received and accepted worship.

- 1) Luke 24:52 - “and they, worshipping Him (Jesus) returned to Jerusalem with great joy.”
(This is my translation of the Greek Text. In the 1977 edition and earlier, the NASV leaves out the part about worship. In 1995 and after, it is included, as it should be. Both the NIV and KJV include it. Both the UBS and Textus Receptus Greek Texts include the participle “worshipping” and there is relatively good manuscript support for it.)
- 2) John 5:23 - “in order that all may honor the Son, even as they honor the Father. He who does not honor the Son does not honor the Father who sent Him.”
- 3) John 20:28 - “And Thomas answered and said to Him, “My Lord and my God.”

(Fact #5) - Godly men in Scripture reject worship.

- 1) Acts 10:25-26 - “But Peter raised him up, saying, “Stand up; I too am just a man.”
- 2) Acts 14:8-18 - “And they began calling Barnabas, Zeus, and Paul, Hermes, because he was the chief speaker...But when the apostles Barnabas and Paul heard of it, they tore their robes and rushed out into the crowd, crying out and saying, “Men, why are you doing these things? We are also men of the same nature as you...”

(Fact #6) - Godly angels in Scripture reject worship.

- 1) Rev. 22:8-9 - “And I, John, am the one who heard and saw these things. And when I heard and saw, I fell down to worship at the feet of the angel who showed me these things. And he said to me, “Do not do that; I am a fellow servant of yours and of your brethren the Prophets and of those who heed the words of this book; worship God.”

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When all of these proofs are seen, it becomes very clear that the Bible affirms, time and time again, that Jesus Christ is God!

QUESTION #16 – What is the “kenosis”?

When it comes to Christology, a critical doctrinal matter is the “kenosis.” The term “kenosis” comes from the Greek verb “ekenosen,” which is from the verb “keno-o,” which is found in Philippians 2:7. The verb means to make empty, to make vain or to make of no effect.

The KJV translates this verb, “made Himself of no reputation.”

The NIV translates this verb, “but made Himself nothing.”

The NASV best translates this verb, “but emptied Himself.”

The verb is used in several N.T. passages.

1. In Romans 4:14, it is translated “made void.”
2. In I Corinthians 1:17, it is translated “made void.”
3. In I Corinthians 9:15, it is translated “empty” boast.
4. In II Corinthians 9:3, it is translated “be made empty.”

The verb used in Philippians 2:7 is aorist tense, meaning at one moment in time or at one point of time Jesus Christ “emptied Himself.” The obvious theological question that is at stake is, “Of what did Jesus Christ empty Himself?” What specifically did Jesus Christ empty Himself? When Jesus Christ came to this earth, of what did He empty Himself?

It is this issue that has become a battleground for theologians and as a result of this, many false conclusions have been drawn concerning Jesus Christ. There are at least four false views pertaining to what Christ gave up:

False View #1 - Jesus Christ gave up some of His attributes.

This view basically divides God’s attributes into two categories:

- 1) Those attributes He must have in order to be God—His ethical and moral attributes such as holiness, justice, righteousness, wisdom, etc.
- 2) Those attributes He has in order to relate to the physical world but doesn’t emphatically need them—His relative or physical attributes such as omnipresence, omniscience and omnipotence. It is claimed that this group of attributes could be surrendered by Christ when He became a man.

There are many reasons why this view is false:

(Reason #1) - God does not and cannot change. James 1:17

(Reason #2) - Jesus Christ does not and cannot change. Hebrews 13:8

(Reason #3) - Jesus Christ demonstrated various attributes at various times:

- A. Omnipresence—John 1:47-48
- B. Omniscience—John 1:47-48; 2:24-25; 4:29
- C. Omnipotence—Luke 4:36; John 11:37-44