

PROVING THE CLAIMS OF JESUS

“The Nicene Creed (A.D. 325) states the uniform belief of all orthodox Christianity that Christ was fully God and fully Man. All heresies regarding Christ deny one or the other of these.” Norman Geisler, “When Skeptics Ask”

Evidence – Christ’s Deity:

1. Where did He get His knowledge from, even as a child?

“After three days they found him in the temple courts, sitting among the teachers, listening to them and asking them questions. Everyone who heard him was amazed at his understanding and his answers.” (Luke 2:46-47)

“The Jews were amazed and asked, ‘How did this man get such learning without having studied?’” (John 7:15)

2. Changed Lives

How did the Apostles, being “unschooled, ordinary men” (Acts 4:13) become transformed into courageous, outspoken proponents of a religion only a few months old?

How do you explain the radical transformations in the lives of millions of believers since then? How do you explain the changes in your life?

Paul is a great example. Based on the proven historical accuracy of the Bible, we know that he was instantly transformed from one of the worst Christian persecutors to one of the mightiest instruments of God. Many modern skeptics who honestly attempt to disprove the claims of the Bible and Jesus wind up becoming strong Christians.

Now skeptics may point to the many “Christians” who do not lead changed lives. This is easily explained by the fact that there is no external test for being a Christian. Any charlatan can claim to be a Christian at any time and do untold damage to Christianity.

We must accept this as part of God’s plan although we have some instructions. “Do not believe every spirit, but test the spirits to see whether they are from God, because many false prophets have gone out into the world.” (1 John 4:1)

3. The Apostles died for their beliefs

If the Apostles “were in on it”, how can you possibly explain that they would willingly lay down their lives with this knowledge? Coupled with the radical transformation in their lives, the only explanation is that Jesus is who He said He was.

4. Miracles

Jesus performed many miracles; healing, transforming substances, prophecy, & resurrection, all of which are historically verifiable. Who but God can do such things?

5. Jesus accepted worship

Prophets (and the Apostles) never accepted worship always instead directing it toward God. Jesus did however; a healed leper (Matt 8:2), a ruler with a request (Matt 9:18), a blind man “‘Lord, I believe.’ And he worshiped Him.”(John 9:38), and others.

6. Unexplainable grace

How do you explain the grace displayed during the trial and crucifixion. Wouldn’t the strongest, toughest man you know of plead his innocence and beg for mercy? After having being brutally beaten and facing the worst death imaginable? Why didn’t Jesus? Where did that strength come from?

7. The resurrection

God raised Him from the dead, fulfilling His own prophecy. He said he was the Messiah, the son of God. Would God resurrect a liar?

8. Explain this...

“Then God said, “Let **us** make man in our image, in our likeness...” (Genesis 1:26)

“Come, let **us** go down and confuse their language so they will not understand each other.” (Genesis 11:7)

“Hear, O Israel: The Lord our God, **the Lord is one.**” (Deuteronomy 6:4) – Jesus repeated this in Mark 12:29-31

Who is “us”? “The Lord is one”?

Evidence – Christ’s Humanity:

1. **Born of a woman – normal human life**

From the Bible we know that although He was conceived supernaturally, He developed normally (as a human), was born normally, grew up normally, and was thought of as a regular guy from Nazareth. “Isn’t this Joseph’s son?” (Luke 4:22)

He hungered (Matt 4:2), thirsted (John 19:28), tired (Mark 4:38), breathed (Luke 23:46), and shared many other traits with us.

2. **Was tempted as we are**

After His baptism He was tempted three times by Satan. Food (or material lusts), power, and tempting/testing God are all things we face. He experienced what we do in this life and can understand on that level.

3. **Died “normally” as a man would have died**

His body died just as ours would have after having been beaten, in shock, physically exhausted, and crucified. Modern medical experts have stated as such. His death was witnessed by John, women followers, the mocking crowd, the soldiers present, and was confirmed by the Roman executioners.

“Jesus of Nazareth underwent Jewish and Roman trials, was flogged, and was sentenced to death by crucifixion. The scourging produced deep stripelike lacerations and appreciable blood loss, and it probably set the stage for hypovolemic shock, as evidenced by the fact that Jesus was too weakened to carry the crossbar (patibulum) to Golgotha. At the site of crucifixion, his wrists were nailed to the patibulum and, after the patibulum was lifted onto the upright post (stipes), his feet were nailed to the stipes. The major pathophysiologic effect of crucifixion was an interference with normal respirations. Accordingly death resulted primarily from hypovolemic shock and exhaustion asphyxia. Jesus' death was ensured by the thrust of a soldier's spear into his side. Modern medical interpretation of the historical evidence indicate that Jesus was dead when taken down from the cross.”

“On the Physical Death of Jesus Christ”, William D. Edwards, MD; Wesley J. Gabel, MDiv; Floyd E Hosmer, MS, AMI
(JAMA 1986;255:1455-1463)

<http://www.godandscience.org/apologetics/deathjesus.pdf>