

Eight Distinctions of the Incomparable JESUS of the Bible

INTRODUCTION

The most important question anyone will ever answer is, *“Who is Jesus?”* Our hearts will never be settled until we settle that question. In today’s pluralistic world, there are many religions and religious philosophies, each with its own perspective of who Jesus Christ is.

In the Bible, Jesus asked His disciples, *“Who do you say that I am?”* (Matt.16:15). Peter replied, “You are the Christ, the Son of the living God” (v.16). If Jesus truly is the God’s Son and Savior of the world (John 1:29; Luke 2:11), then every person’s eternal destiny depends on his or her answer to that question. Hence, it is crucial to consider the eight distinctions set forth below, which identify the incomparable, biblical Jesus—who proved His claim to be divine by:

- His performance of countless miracles
- His fulfillment of extensive prophecy
- His supernatural resurrection from the dead

The Biblical Jesus:

1 Performed Countless Miracles

Secular historians have authenticated the Gospel records as trustworthy historical documents—primary source evidence for the life of Christ.¹ The original disciples (eye witnesses of the life of Christ), recorded in them the teachings and miracles of Jesus (2 Pet. 1:16). Most of His miracles were a renewal of fallen creation, e.g., restoring sight, making the lame walk, even restoring life to people who had died.² By His

healings, He showed acts of mercy toward suffering humanity. He also displayed miraculous power over nature; e.g., calming a stormy sea with one command (Matt. 8:26–27) and multiplying a few loaves and fishes to feed 5,000 people (Matt. 14:15–21). Jesus pointed to His miracles to validate His claim to be the Messiah predicted by the prophets of old (John 10:32; 15:24).³

A 5-Step Scriptural Defense for the Deity of Christ

(1) **Jesus claimed to be God** (John 14:11; 5:18; Luke 22:66–71). (2) **Jesus shares the essence and attributes of God** (John 1:1–3; 2:23–25; 17:5, 24; Col. 1:17; 2:9; Titus 2:13–14; Matt. 18:20; Mark 1:24; Acts 1:24; 3:14). (3) **Jesus is eternal** (John 17:5; Phil. 2:5–6; 1 Peter 1:20). (4) **Jesus is the divine/human interpreter of the invisible God** (Heb. 1:3; John 1:18; Matt. 11:27). (5) **Jesus was worshiped as God** (Matt. 2:8–11; 8:2; 14:33; 16:16; 20:20; Luke 24:51–52; John 9:31–32, 38). **Finally, these nine passages clearly assert Jesus’ deity:** Rom. 9:5; John 1:1–2; 1:18; 20:28; Heb. 1:8; Titus 2:13; 2 Peter 1:1; Acts 20:28; 1 John 5:20.⁴

The Biblical Jesus:

2 Fulfilled Numerous Predictive Prophecies

Only God can predict the future with 100% accuracy. The Old Testament contains more than 300 specific predictions of the coming Messiah, the Christ. Centuries later, Jesus of Nazareth fulfilled every one. And 61 of them were major messianic prophecies.⁵ For example, the prophet Micah predicted in the 8th century BC that Messiah would be born in Bethlehem (Micah 5:2), the very place of Jesus’ birth (Matt. 2:1–6; John 7:42). Other prophecies pertained to the time of Messiah’s life, death, resurrection, and everlasting rule. (The statistical probability of just eight of those prophecies being fulfilled in one person is 1 in 10 to the 17th power!)⁶ Jesus’ identity as Messiah has certainly been established.

The Biblical Jesus:

3 Loves Us with a Sacrificial Love

According to the Bible, Jesus Christ willingly gave His life on a Roman cross 2,000 years ago, to pay the penalty for all our sins. His motive was divine love (Rom. 5:8). At the moment Adam and Eve disobeyed God in the Garden of Eden, humanity became flawed, and sin and death entered the world. As a result, all people have a sin nature and are born separated from God (Rom. 3:23). Although the result of sin is death, there is a glorious remedy (Rom. 6:23).

“For God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son [Jesus as our Savior], that whoever believes in Him should not perish but have everlasting life” (John 3:16).

“The Son of God became a man to enable men to become sons of God.”⁷
—C. S. Lewis

The Biblical Jesus:

4 Is God, Who Came in Human Form

The New Testament reveals that Jesus is *God incarnate*—God who came to earth as a human being, yet without giving up His divinity (John 1:1–3; 1 Tim. 3:16; 1 John 4:2–3; Phil. 2:7). **“In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. He was in the beginning with God”** (John 1:1–2). In verse 14, *the Word* is clearly identified as Jesus Christ. God exists in three persons—Father, Son, and Holy Spirit—yet He is one God.⁸ The three persons of the Trinity are coequal, coexistent, and coeternal. Jesus is the *Son of God* (meaning subordinate in relationship to the Father) yet also *God the Son* (meaning equal in nature to the Father).

THE UNIQUE GOD-MAN



Jesus of Nazareth claimed to be fully God and fully man. (See Luke 22:66–71; John 5:18; 8:58; 14:11.) His phrase “I Am” indicated He was eternal and existing before Abraham (Ex. 3:14).⁹ God the Father identified Jesus as His divine Son at Jesus’ baptism (Matt. 3:13–17) and at His transfiguration (Matt. 17:1–9).

The Biblical Jesus:

5 Offers Us Everlasting Life

Jesus Christ came to earth to reconcile God and man by giving Himself as a ransom for all (1 Tim. 2:5–6). John the Baptist announced, **“Behold! The Lamb of God [God’s Son to be led to the slaughter] who takes away the sin of the world!”** (John 1:29; Isa. 53:7). Jesus paid a tremendous price to offer us eternal salvation. By His death and resurrection, He opened the door to heaven for all who will believe in Him (John 14:6). Jesus our Good Shepherd declared, **“My sheep hear My voice, and I know them, and they follow Me. And I give them eternal life, and they shall never perish”** (John 10:27–28).

The Biblical Jesus:

6 Redeemed Us by God’s Grace

Christ’s sacrifice for us demonstrates God’s gift of grace (2 Cor. 8:9). Grace is God’s unmerited favor toward man.¹⁰ **“For by grace you have been saved through faith, and that not of yourselves; it is the gift of God, not of [human] works”** (Eph. 2:8–9).

Although we are sinful (imperfect) people, we can have the rich reward of going to heaven someday because Jesus died in our place. While God is a loving God, He's also righteous. So the penalty for our sins had to be paid. Out of His deep love for us, God declared us innocent by the precious shed blood of His own Son (Rom. 5:9; John 3:16).

The Biblical Jesus:



7 Rose from the Dead and Lives Today

The resurrection of Jesus, an unmatched miracle, is the primary validation of Jesus' claim to be divine.¹¹ Jesus even predicted that He would rise from the dead (Matt. 12:38–40). On the third day after His burial, His tomb was empty. Jesus had returned to life in His resurrected body. He walked the earth 40 days, teaching about God's kingdom before hundreds of eyewitnesses (Acts 1:3; 1 Cor. 15:5–8). Then He ascended into heaven, where He is alive today at the right hand of the Father (Mark 16:19). Jesus conquered sin and death and declared, "I am the resurrection and the life. He who believes in Me, though he may die, he shall live" (John 11:25).

The Biblical Jesus:



8 Is Distinct from Counterfeit Jesuses

Tragically, pseudo-Christian cults unknowingly promote an unbiblical Jesus who cannot save us (1 Tim. 2:5). The Bible warns that there will be false christs and false gospels (Matt. 7:15; 24:24; 2 Cor. 11:3–4). Hence, we are to test teachers and their messages (1 John 4:1–3). And we are to earnestly defend God's truth (Jude 3), while speaking the truth in love (Eph. 4:15).

Two common marks of a cult are: (a) They add to the Bible another book or source of revelation from

God (Jude 3–4), and (b) Their beliefs are centered on a human religious founder, saint, guru, or messiah (Heb. 12:2; 4:14; Luke 21:8; Eph. 1:22–23).

Examples of Counterfeits

Some examples of cultic and other counterfeit Jesuses are:

- The "Jesus" of Mormonism is one of many gods, a man who attained godhood through obedience and devotion. He is the spirit brother of Lucifer.
- The "Jesus" of Jehovah's Witnesses is a created being, the first creation by God. He is Michael the archangel.
- The "Jesus" of Scientology is a man who worked toward godhood through levels of knowledge (yet never attained the highest level of Scientology).
- The "Jesus" of Christian Science is a human being who demonstrated "the Christ," the Divine Idea.
- The "Jesus" of the Unification Church is a man who attained deity, but is not God Himself. He will be reincarnated in an Eastern country.
- The "Jesus" of Baha'i is one of several manifestations of the same God. He is one of at least nine divine messengers, including Buddha and Moses.
- The "Jesus" of New Age (Hinduism) is a good person, sage, or prophet indwelt by the Christ or "cosmic consciousness." He became awakened.
- The "Jesus" of Islam is one of many prophets of Allah. He is not divine. He was superseded by the prophet Muhammad.

CONCLUSION

Man-based ideas and writings abound concerning who Jesus is. But which Jesus guarantees us eternal life and is worthy of our worship? The biblical Jesus—for He is incomparable. As our Good Shepherd, He laid down His life for His sheep because He loves us unconditionally. And He alone traveled to the uncharted territory beyond death, then returned to earth to call us into God's family.

Even today, the divine Son of God is knocking on the door of our hearts. He longs to have a personal love-relationship with us now and forever. Are you ready to answer His call?

A PRAYER TO RECEIVE JESUS CHRIST

"Dear Lord God, thank You for Your amazing love and grace. Thank You for sending Your Son, Jesus Christ, to be the Savior of mankind. I believe Jesus died on the cross for my sins to give me eternal life and that He rose again. Jesus, please forgive me and be my personal Lord and Savior. I want to follow You, Lord, and have a relationship with You. In Jesus' name, amen."



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JOHN 14:6

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WHO DO YOU SAY JESUS IS?



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christian apologetics

biblical christianity