

The Real Jesus

by Servetus the Evangelical

Jesus of Nazareth is the most famous man who has ever lived. But who was He? To learn about His identity, we must turn to the Bible. The New Testament presents Jesus as a seer-prophet, a teaching rabbi, an itinerant preacher, a wisdom sage, a charismatic healer, a miracle worker, and an exorcist. It applies to Him the titles Messiah/Christ, Son of Man, Son of God, Savior, and Lord. It says He was born of a virgin, lived a sinless life in obedience to God, and died on a cross due to sinful men. Yet Jesus' suffering and death was according to God's plan as atonement for the sins of others. For those who believe these things about Jesus, God will forgive them of their sins and give them eternal life.

The New Testament also claims that God vindicated Jesus by literally raising Him from the dead. It reveals that for the next forty days Jesus literally appeared to many of His disciples, after which He ascended from their midst into heaven. Then God exalted Jesus by inviting Him to sit with Him on His throne. The New Testament also reveals that Jesus will return to the earth sometime in the future, bringing with Him His promised and glorious kingdom. Then God will bring about the resurrection of His deceased people, the righteous dead, as well as judgment day.

During the next three centuries, the Catholic Church adhered faithfully to these scriptural teachings about Jesus. But in the fourth and fifth centuries, the Church officially proclaimed that Jesus was not only a man but also God by possessing two natures: a fully human nature and a fully divine nature, the latter called "the deity of Christ." And through the Church's councils and creeds it pronounced that if anyone did not believe that Jesus was fully God—co-equal and co-eternal with God the Father and the Holy Spirit—that person did not really believe in Jesus and thus was not a genuine Christian. Roman Catholic, Greek Orthodox, and Protestant church denominations still officially embrace these additional proclamations, claiming that they reflect the New Testament. Furthermore, they identify the Father, Son, and Spirit as the "Trinity" even though this word is not in the Bible.

On the contrary, when the Catholic Church identified Jesus as God, it departed from the fundamental, biblical, Judeo-Christian teaching that God is "one," called "monotheism." It happened because, when the Church expanded into Gentile lands, it gradually (1) became rather anti-Semitic, (2) abandoned the established principle of using only scriptural terms and categories in order to identify Jesus, (3) went beyond Scripture by introducing Greek metaphysics into theology in an effort to identify Jesus more precisely, and therefore (4) interpreted Jesus' status as "the Son of God" ontologically, thereby making this title synonymous with the word "God." Instead, Jesus should be understood as the Son of God in a Jewish context, so that this title means One specially favored by God to be Israel's Messiah.

Jesus was not God because of the following biblical evidence or lack thereof:

There is *no* New Testament evidence that Jesus ever *thought* that He was God.
There is *no* New Testament evidence that Jesus ever *claimed* that He was God.
There *is* New Testament evidence that Jesus *denied* that He claimed to be God.
At Jesus' examination before the Sanhedrin, He was *never* accused of claiming to be God.
The New Testament regularly *distinguishes* between God and Jesus as two separate individuals.
The New Testament constantly *interchanges* the words "God" and "the Father."
The New Testament repeatedly identifies "God" *exclusively* as "the Father."
The New Testament contains *no* unambiguous statement such as "Jesus (Christ) is God."
In the synoptic gospels and evangelistic sermons of Acts, Jesus is *never* identified as "God."

Jesus was not God because Jesus said concerning Himself:

"Why do you call Me good? No one is good except God alone" (Mark 10:18).¹
"the Son can do nothing of Himself" (John 5:19, cf. v. 30).
"You,... make Yourself out to be God." "I said, 'I am the Son of God'" (John 10:33, 36).
"The Father is greater than I" (John 14:28).
"Father,... the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom You have sent" (John 17:1, 3).
"Jesus said to her, 'I ascend to My Father ... and My God and your God'" (John 20:17).

The Real Jesus

by Servetus the Evangelical

Jesus of Nazareth is the most famous man who has ever lived. But who was He? To learn about His identity, we must turn to the Bible. The New Testament presents Jesus as a seer-prophet, a teaching rabbi, an itinerant preacher, a wisdom sage, a charismatic healer, a miracle worker, and an exorcist. It applies to Him the titles Messiah/Christ, Son of Man, Son of God, Savior, and Lord. It says He was born of a virgin, lived a sinless life in obedience to God, and died on a cross due to sinful men. Yet Jesus' suffering and death was according to God's plan as atonement for the sins of others. For those who believe these things about Jesus, God will forgive them of their sins and give them eternal life.

The New Testament also claims that God vindicated Jesus by literally raising Him from the dead. It reveals that for the next forty days Jesus literally appeared to many of His disciples, after which He ascended from their midst into heaven. Then God exalted Jesus by inviting Him to sit with Him on His throne. The New Testament also reveals that Jesus will return to the earth sometime in the future, bringing with Him His promised and glorious kingdom. Then God will bring about the resurrection of His deceased people, the righteous dead, as well as judgment day.

During the next three centuries, the Catholic Church adhered faithfully to these scriptural teachings about Jesus. But in the fourth and fifth centuries, the Church officially proclaimed that Jesus was not only a man but also God by possessing two natures: a fully human nature and a fully divine nature, the latter called "the deity of Christ." And through the Church's councils and creeds it pronounced that if anyone did not believe that Jesus was fully God—co-equal and co-eternal with God the Father and the Holy Spirit—that person did not really believe in Jesus and thus was not a genuine Christian. Roman Catholic, Greek Orthodox, and Protestant church denominations still officially embrace these additional proclamations, claiming that they reflect the New Testament. Furthermore, they identify the Father, Son, and Spirit as the "Trinity" even though this word is not in the Bible.

On the contrary, when the Catholic Church identified Jesus as God, it departed from the fundamental, biblical, Judeo-Christian teaching that God is "one," called "monotheism." It happened because, when the Church expanded into Gentile lands, it gradually (1) became rather anti-Semitic, (2) abandoned the established principle of using only scriptural terms and categories in order to identify Jesus, (3) went beyond Scripture by introducing Greek metaphysics into theology in an effort to identify Jesus more precisely, and therefore (4) interpreted Jesus' status as "the Son of God" ontologically, thereby making this title synonymous with the word "God." Instead, Jesus should be understood as the Son of God in a Jewish context, so that this title means One specially favored by God to be Israel's Messiah.

Jesus was not God because of the following biblical evidence or lack thereof:

There is *no* New Testament evidence that Jesus ever *thought* that He was God.
There is *no* New Testament evidence that Jesus ever *claimed* that He was God.
There *is* New Testament evidence that Jesus *denied* that He claimed to be God.
At Jesus' examination before the Sanhedrin, He was *never* accused of claiming to be God.
The New Testament regularly *distinguishes* between God and Jesus as two separate individuals.
The New Testament constantly *interchanges* the words "God" and "the Father."
The New Testament repeatedly identifies "God" *exclusively* as "the Father."
The New Testament contains *no* unambiguous statement such as "Jesus (Christ) is God."
In the synoptic gospels and evangelistic sermons of Acts, Jesus is *never* identified as "God."

Jesus was not God because Jesus said concerning Himself:

"Why do you call Me good? No one is good except God alone" (Mark 10:18).¹
"the Son can do nothing of Himself" (John 5:19, cf. v. 30).
"You,... make Yourself out to be God." "I said, 'I am the Son of God'" (John 10:33, 36).
"The Father is greater than I" (John 14:28).
"Father,... the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom You have sent" (John 17:1, 3).
"Jesus said to her, 'I ascend to My Father ... and My God and your God'" (John 20:17).

Jesus was not God because of the following additional Scriptures:

Jesus was visible, but God is “invisible” (1 John 1:1-3; John 1:18; 1 Timothy 1:17).
Jesus was approachable, but God “dwells in unapproachable light” (1 Timothy 6:16; Psalm 104:2).
Jesus was tempted, but “God cannot be tempted by evil” (Mark 1:13; James 1:13).
Jesus was mortal, dying on a cross, so that only God was “immortal” (1 Timothy 1:17; 6:16).
Jesus said that the Father is “the one and only God” (John 5:44).
Jesus said on the cross, “MY GOD, MY GOD, WHY HAVE YOU FORSAKEN ME” (Matt 27:46).
Paul wrote that “God ... is one” and “the only wise God” (Romans 3:30; 16:27).
Paul wrote that the Father is “the only God” and “only Sovereign” (1 Timothy 1:17; 6:15).

Peter did not believe Jesus was God because he distinguished them:

“Jesus the Nazarene, a man attested to you by God with miracles and wonders and signs which God performed through Him in your midst” (Acts 2:22).
“Rulers and elders of the people, ... Jesus Christ the Nazarene, whom you crucified, whom God raised from the dead” (Acts 4:8, 10).
“God has made Him both Lord and Christ—this Jesus whom you crucified” (Acts 2:36).
“You know of Jesus of Nazareth, how God anointed Him with the Holy Spirit and with power, and how He went about doing good and healing ... for God was with Him” (Acts 10:38).

Paul the monotheist did not believe Jesus was God because he wrote:

“For there is one God, and one mediator also between God and men, the man Christ Jesus” (1 Timothy 2:5).
“There is no God but one ... there is but one God, the Father, from whom are all things and we exist for Him; and one Lord, Jesus Christ, by whom are all things, and we exist through Him” (1 Corinthians 8:4, 6).
“There is ... one Lord, one faith, one baptism, one God and Father” (Ephesians 4:4-6).
“God and Father of our/the Lord Jesus” (Romans 15:6; 2 Corinthians 1:3; 11:31; Ephesians 1.3, 17).
“Christ belongs to God” because “God is the head of Christ” (1 Corinthians 3:23; 11:3).
“God was in Christ reconciling the world to Himself” (2 Corinthians 5:19).
“Grace to you and peace from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ” (salutations 6x).

Jesus was not God because of the following logical reasons:

If Jesus did miracles by means of a divine nature, the Father *did not* do the works of Jesus.
If Jesus’ ability to do miracles was intrinsic, He did not *need* the power of the Holy Spirit.
God is totally self-sufficient, but Jesus *needed* the miracle-working power of God’s Spirit.
There is *no* biblical evidence that Jesus had two natures and two wills, which is non-human.
God *transcends* His creation, so that being God is *incompatible* with being human.
God foreknew the yet future date of Jesus’ return to earth, but Jesus *did not* know it (Mark 13.32).

Thus, the New Testament *does not* teach that Jesus was God but that God *sent* Jesus,² God was *with* Jesus,³ God was *in* Jesus,⁴ and God *raised* Jesus from the dead. The traditional view that Jesus was God is based mostly on only a few biblical texts.⁵ Most of them have grammatical problems, and Bible versions often differ as to whether they call Jesus “God.” Some are properly interpreted to mean that *God was in Christ*. In sum, Jesus was not God but a virgin-born man who endured temptation, suffering, shame, trial, and death to provide salvation, and God vindicated and exalted Him for it. Praise Jesus and His God!

This tract is a condensation of the book by Servetus the Evangelical entitled *The Restitution of Jesus Christ*. You can learn about it and his pseudonym at his website, ServetusTheEvangelical.com. Buy this book and print this free tract there. Servetus the Evangelical is a former Trinitarian and has been an Evangelical Christian all of his adult life. Guess his identity at this website, where clues will be provided every month until late 2011. Then, on the 500th anniversary of the birth of Michael Servetus, who was burnt at the stake for alleged heresies, this author will reveal his identity in a new book that will tell the intriguing story of his quest for the real Jesus of history.

¹ All Scripture references are from the New American Standard Bible.

² It is stated over forty times in the Gospel of John that God “sent,” or did “send,” Jesus.

³ John 3:2; 8:29; 16:32; Acts 10:38; cf. John 1:1-2.

⁴ John 10:38; 14:10-11; 17:21; 2 Corinthians 5:19.

⁵ The most prominent are the following: Isaiah 9:6; John 1:1, 18; 10:30-38; 20:28; Romans 9:5; Philippians 2:6-7; 2 Thessalonians 1:12; Titus 2:13; Hebrews 1:8; 2 Peter 1:1; 1 John 5:20.

Jesus was not God because of the following additional Scriptures:

Jesus was visible, but God is “invisible” (1 John 1:1-3; John 1:18; 1 Timothy 1:17).
Jesus was approachable, but God “dwells in unapproachable light” (1 Timothy 6:16; Psalm 104:2).
Jesus was tempted, but “God cannot be tempted by evil” (Mark 1:13; James 1:13).
Jesus was mortal, dying on a cross, so that only God was “immortal” (1 Timothy 1:17; 6:16).
Jesus said that the Father is “the one and only God” (John 5:44).
Jesus said on the cross, “MY GOD, MY GOD, WHY HAVE YOU FORSAKEN ME” (Matt 27:46).
Paul wrote that “God ... is one” and “the only wise God” (Romans 3:30; 16:27).
Paul wrote that the Father is “the only God” and “only Sovereign” (1 Timothy 1:17; 6:15).

Peter did not believe Jesus was God because he distinguished them:

“Jesus the Nazarene, a man attested to you by God with miracles and wonders and signs which God performed through Him in your midst” (Acts 2:22).
“Rulers and elders of the people, ... Jesus Christ the Nazarene, whom you crucified, whom God raised from the dead” (Acts 4:8, 10).
“God has made Him both Lord and Christ—this Jesus whom you crucified” (Acts 2:36).
“You know of Jesus of Nazareth, how God anointed Him with the Holy Spirit and with power, and how He went about doing good and healing ... for God was with Him” (Acts 10:38).

Paul the monotheist did not believe Jesus was God because he wrote:

“For there is one God, and one mediator also between God and men, the man Christ Jesus” (1 Timothy 2:5).
“There is no God but one ... there is but one God, the Father, from whom are all things and we exist for Him; and one Lord, Jesus Christ, by whom are all things, and we exist through Him” (1 Corinthians 8:4, 6).
“There is ... one Lord, one faith, one baptism, one God and Father” (Ephesians 4:4-6).
“God and Father of our/the Lord Jesus” (Romans 15:6; 2 Corinthians 1:3; 11:31; Ephesians 1.3, 17).
“Christ belongs to God” because “God is the head of Christ” (1 Corinthians 3:23; 11:3).
“God was in Christ reconciling the world to Himself” (2 Corinthians 5:19).
“Grace to you and peace from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ” (salutations 6x).

Jesus was not God because of the following logical reasons:

If Jesus did miracles by means of a divine nature, the Father *did not* do the works of Jesus.
If Jesus’ ability to do miracles was intrinsic, He did not *need* the power of the Holy Spirit.
God is totally self-sufficient, but Jesus *needed* the miracle-working power of God’s Spirit.
There is *no* biblical evidence that Jesus had two natures and two wills, which is non-human.
God *transcends* His creation, so that being God is *incompatible* with being human.
God foreknew the yet future date of Jesus’ return to earth, but Jesus *did not* know it (Mark 13.32).

Thus, the New Testament *does not* teach that Jesus was God but that God *sent* Jesus,² God was *with* Jesus,³ God was *in* Jesus,⁴ and God *raised* Jesus from the dead. The traditional view that Jesus was God is based mostly on only a few biblical texts.⁵ Most of them have grammatical problems, and Bible versions often differ as to whether they call Jesus “God.” Some are properly interpreted to mean that *God was in Christ*. In sum, Jesus was not God but a virgin-born man who endured temptation, suffering, shame, trial, and death to provide salvation, and God vindicated and exalted Him for it. Praise Jesus and His God!

This tract is a condensation of the book by Servetus the Evangelical entitled *The Restitution of Jesus Christ*. You can learn about it and his pseudonym at his website, ServetusTheEvangelical.com. Buy this book and print this free tract there. Servetus the Evangelical is a former Trinitarian and has been an Evangelical Christian all of his adult life. Guess his identity at this website, where clues will be provided every month until late 2011. Then, on the 500th anniversary of the birth of Michael Servetus, who was burnt at the stake for alleged heresies, this author will reveal his identity in a new book that will tell the intriguing story of his quest for the real Jesus of history.

¹ All Scripture references are from the New American Standard Bible.

² It is stated over forty times in the Gospel of John that God “sent,” or did “send,” Jesus.

³ John 3:2; 8:29; 16:32; Acts 10:38; cf. John 1:1-2.

⁴ John 10:38; 14:10-11; 17:21; 2 Corinthians 5:19.

⁵ The most prominent are the following: Isaiah 9:6; John 1:1, 18; 10:30-38; 20:28; Romans 9:5; Philippians 2:6-7; 2 Thessalonians 1:12; Titus 2:13; Hebrews 1:8; 2 Peter 1:1; 1 John 5:20.