

How Can You Say That Jesus Is God?

Many people today question whether Jesus was really God. Popular movies and fictional books, such as the *Da Vinci Code*, put forth ideas that challenge his divinity and portray him simply as a man. Other religions teach that Jesus was simply a good teacher or a prophet but stop short in saying that he was fully God and fully man and would not give him the title 'Son of God.'

In exploring this issue of Jesus' divinity, of him being fully God, it is important to examine the evidence of what Jesus said about himself, how he acted, and what other people around him believed him to be. Did Jesus claim to be God? Did he act like it? And did everyone around him believe him to be God (or at least did they believe that Jesus thought he was God)? The best place to answer these questions are the Gospels, because they are all written by first century authors, some of whom were eye witnesses to the actual events.

Did Jesus make claims to be God? The Gospels make it clear that Jesus did claim to be God. One of the best examples of this is in John 8:58-59 where Jesus calls himself by the divine name 'I AM' and said that he existed before Abraham. Those listening in the temple understood immediately what Jesus was saying and tried to stone him for blasphemy. Further in John 14:9, Jesus tells Philip 'He who has seen me has seen the Father.'

Did Jesus act like God? Again, his actions matched his words. Jesus lived out his beliefs, doing things that only God could do. He forgave sinners (Mark 2:5), he taught with authority (Matt. 7:29), he had power over demons (Mark 1:25-26), he had power over nature (Mark 4:39), he had power over death (Luke 7:14-15), and he had authority in heaven and earth (Matthew 28:18).

Did those around him believe him to be God? Yes, people either believed that he was God or believed that Jesus claimed to be God. The first worthy eyewitness is the angel Gabriel, who announced to the virgin Mary that she would give birth to the 'Son of the Most High' (Luke 1:31-32). Second, the demons believed him to be God (Mark 1:24). Third, the religious leaders, his enemies, believed that he claimed to be God and wanted to kill him for blasphemy (John 5:18). Fourth, people worshipped him as God (Matthew 2:11, 28:9; John 9:38). And fifth, his followers believed him to be God (Matt 16:16, John 20:28).

The evidence from the Gospel records is clear. Jesus believed he was God, he acted like it, and everyone around him believed him to be God also. But what do you believe him to be? Do you take him at his word that he is God, the promised Messiah and Savior of the world? Or do you believe him to be a liar, knowingly deceiving people? Or is he a lunatic, thinking that he was God but really wasn't? But could a liar or a lunatic really heal people, raise the dead, and calm the storm? No! The most logical conclusion about Jesus that best fits the evidence is that he is the Lord, the Messiah, fully man and fully God.