

POSITIVE STATEMENTS THAT JESUS CHRIST IS GOD

In this section, it is not my purpose to expound fully the verses used, but simply to call attention to the fact that there are many scriptures that positively affirm the Deity of the Lord Jesus Christ.

One certainly may admit that Christ is God, and yet think of Him as being "god" in some inferior sense, as with Jehovah's-Witnesses. We hold to no such position. All we contend for here is that Christ is God, positively and emphatically stated. Later we purpose to show that this is not "god" in some watered down, inferior sense, but God in the highest degree.

Is Jesus Christ God? In answer, we summon John 1:1-2, which reads:

"In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. The same was in the beginning with God."

The One designated here as "the Word" is clearly the same One spoken of in verses 14, 15, 34, "And the Word was made flesh, and dwelt among us. . .John bare witness of him. . .that this is the Son of God." This One "was God." In *The New World Translation of the Holy Scriptures*, published by the Watchtower Bible and Tract Society, presenting the views of Jehovah's-Witnesses, John 1:1 reads:

"In [the] beginning the Word was, and the Word was with God, and the Word was a god."

Thus, is presented "God" and "a god." They teach that the God created Jesus Christ, a lesser "god," and then turned over all subsequent creation to him. Yet, The God who supposedly did this said, "before me there was no God formed, neither shall there be after me"(Isaiah 43:10). Jehovah's Witnesses say, not only was there a god formed, but that the God, who denied it, actually formed such a one. Thus, *The New World Translation of the Holy Scriptures* reflects their view again in Colossians 1:16, which reads:

"because by means of him all [other] things were created..."

Notice the subtlety, "all other things." Since, according to them, He was created by God, and then all subsequent creation came from Him, they translate, "because by means of him all [other] things were created." They, however were not consistent in their translation because John 1:3, in *The New World Translation*, reads as follows:

"All things came into existence through him, and apart from him not even one thing came into existence."

If "all things" here , and not "all other things," were created by Jesus Christ, then He is not an exception, and He preceded "all" creation. Thus, the One who so created "all things" is "God" (John 1:1).

Is Jesus Christ God? In answer, we summon John 20:28, which reads:

"And Thomas answered and said unto him, my Lord and my God."

The "him" of this text, addressed by Thomas, is "Jesus" (John 20:19), also called "the Lord," verse 20, and "Jesus. . .the Christ, the Son of God," verse 31. Thomas was a Jew. The Jews were a monotheistic people. Yet, he acknowledges Christ to be "God." If he was mistaken, the Lord should have corrected him. He did not. Therefore, the truth is: He is God. See John 20:28 under special studies.

Is Jesus Christ God? In answer, we summon Hebrews 1:8, 10, which reads:

"But unto the Son he saith, Thy throne, O God, is for ever. . . And, Thou, Lord, in the beginning hast laid the foundation of the earth; and the heavens are the works of thine hands:"

Hebrews 1:8 is quoted from Psalms 45:6, 7. And, Hebrews 1:10 is quoted from Psalms 102:25-27. The writer shows both passages to be the address of God the Father to "the Son". Thus, God the father addresses "the Son" as both "God" and "Lord."

Is Jesus Christ God? In answer, we summon I John 5:20, which reads:

"And we know that the Son of God is come, and hath given us an understanding, that we may know him that is true, and we are in him that is true, even in his Son Jesus Christ. This is the true God, and eternal life."

As Jehovah is termed "the true God. . .the living God" (Jeremiah 10:10), so "his Son Jesus Christ. . .is the true God, and eternal life" (I John 5:20).

Is Jesus Christ God? In answer, we summon Romans 9:5, which reads:

"Whose are the fathers, and of whom as concerning the flesh Christ came, who is over all, God blessed for ever. Amen."

As clearly as one could state it, "Christ. . .who is over all, God blessed for ever."

Is Jesus Christ God? In answer, we summon Acts 20:28, which reads:

"Take heed therefore unto yourselves, and to all the flock, over the which the Holy Ghost hath made you overseers, to feed the church of God, which he hath purchased with his own blood."

If words mean anything, here, it is "God" who "purchased with his own blood" the "church," an obvious reference to the Lord Jesus Christ since He is the very One who "loved the church, and gave himself for it" (Ephesians 5:25).

Is Jesus Christ God? In answer, we summon II Peter 1:1, which reads:

"Simon Peter, a servant and an apostle of Jesus Christ, to them that have obtained like precious faith with us through the righteousness of God and our Saviour Jesus Christ."

Here, reference is made to "God and our Saviour Jesus Christ." The construction of this verse might lead one to think that two persons are intended. One, "God." And, two, "our Saviour Jesus Christ." But, such is not the case. The A.S.V. gives an alternate in the footnote as, "our God and Saviour."

In Dana and Mantey's book, *A Manual Grammar of the Greek New Testament*, there is a rule of Greek grammar that pertains to II Peter 1:1, and which brings out the Deity of Christ. The rule in simple paraphrase is as follows:

When two nouns in the same case are connected by the Greek word "and," and the first noun is preceded by the definite article "the," and the second noun is not preceded by the definite article, the second noun refers to the same person or thing to which the first noun refers, and is a further description of it.

The rule applies in II Peter 1:11 where reference is made to "our Lord and saviour Jesus Christ." The Lord and the Saviour are the same person, not two persons, and the word "Saviour" is a further description

of the word "Lord." The rule applies in II Peter 2:20 where reference is made to "the Lord and saviour Jesus Christ." The rule applies in II Peter 3:18 where reference is made to "our Lord and saviour Jesus Christ." A. T. Robertson, in recognition of the rule, and in commenting on II Peter 1:11; 2:20; 3:18, said that reference is made to:

". . .one person, not two. . ." (*Word Pictures in the New Testament*, Volume VI, "The Second Epistle of Peter," page 147).

The same rule also applies to the wording of Titus 2:13 where reference is made to "the great God and our Saviour Jesus Christ." A. T. Robertson makes the same application of the rule to this text in Volume IV, "Epistle to Titus," pages 604, 605. Thus, Jesus Christ is:

1. "The God and Saviour;"
2. "The Lord and Saviour;"
3. "The great God and Saviour."

These verses, and the rule that applies, are unmistakable references to the Deity of Christ.

Is Jesus Christ God? In answer, we summon Matthew 1:23, which reads:

"Behold, a virgin shall be with child, and shall bring forth a son, and they shall call his name Emmanuel, which being interpreted is, God with us."

This is a quotation from Isaiah 7:14, where reference is prophetically made of the incarnation of the promised Messiah, the Lord Jesus Christ. "His name" meant "God with us," and on the basis of John 1:1, 14, John 20:28, Hebrews 1:8, 10, I John 5:20, Romans 9:5, Acts 20:28 and Titus 2:13, etc., we know that "God was manifest in the flesh" (I Timothy 3:16). This is clearly "The mighty God" of Isaiah 9:6, 7.

Other scriptures could be cited in support of the Deity of Christ, positive statements of that fact.

Also, there are numerous examples of scripture that teach the same thing by a different manner. For instance, in Mark 2:5, Christ said to a man, "Son, thy sins be forgiven thee." A group of "scribes" present reasoned "in their hearts," verse 6, and charged the Lord with speaking "blasphemies," verse 7. Their charge seemed justified inasmuch as "God only" has the power to forgive sins. Since the Lord assumed this divine prerogative, they asked, "Why doth this man speak blasphemies? Who can forgive sins but God only?" If the Lord was not God, their "reasoning"

was correct, and they did not believe that He was God. But, if Jesus Christ was God, and held a peculiar relation to God which justified His claim, then He had every right to do what He did. The Lord then justified His claim by healing the man "sick of the palsy," verses 10-12.

Although "the scribes" were "reasoning in their hearts," verse 6, saying nothing audibly, the Lord knew what was in their hearts, and revealed their very thoughts, verses 8-9. This is a prerogative that resides in God only (Jeremiah 17:9-10). Christ possessed that ability (John 2:24, 25; Revelation 2:19, 23; Luke 7:39, 40, etc.). Hence, He exercised another divine prerogative in saying, "thy sins be forgiven thee," and then justified His claim by healing the man. He is God.

In addition to the ideas found in John 1:1, 2, John 20:28, Hebrews 1:8, 10, I John 5:20, Romans 9:5, Acts 20:28, II Peter 1:1, Matthew 1:23, Isaiah 9:6, Titus 2:13, and Mark 2:5-12, positively affirming that Christ is God, we could add other verses such as John 5:18, which we discuss under the special study section, and other stories as found in Mark 5:1-20. That story involves "the maniac of Gadara," and is discussed also in Matthew and Luke. When "the maniac of Gadara" was healed by Christ, he was instructed to, "Go. . .tell them how great things the Lord hath done for thee" (Mark 5:19). Who is this Benefactor called "the Lord"? Well, Luke records, "Return. . .and shew how great things God hath done unto thee" (Luke 8:39). If words mean anything, "the Lord" is "God." But, notice: The healed man was specifically instructed to "go. . .tell. . .how great things the Lord," or "God," as in the parallel account, "hath done unto thee." Yet, what did he go tell? Both Mark and Luke record that he told of:

"...how great things Jesus had done for him" (Mark 5:20; Luke 8:39).

The conclusion is inescapable to the honest mind. The Lord God is Jesus.

The word "God," when used of Christ, does not have some lesser meaning. As we study, this will become increasingly clearer. All we contend for at this time is that He is God by positive statements in God's word.

Our next article establishes the scriptural fact that there is a difference between God and man.

Since Jesus Christ is God by positive statements in God's word, and there is a difference between God and man, then what obligation does scripture place on man arising therefrom? Let us see in the next lesson.