

THE RELATIONSHIPS OF CHRIST

A Study of the Self-Identity of Christ

Questions Regarding Jesus' Identity

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Good or Deceiver?

Christ's Identity Was A Point Of Controversy Among Many

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Signs and Claims

- Signs alone do not prove one is God
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 - Because Jesus doesn't come out and say, "Hey folks, I'm God," some think that Jesus never thought He was
 - In the "Jesus of John" series, we noted both the claims and signs of Christ and proved that Jesus was the Christ, the Son of God...which means He is God!
 - Yet, some say those claims are exaggerated by the authors and are not the exact representation of who Christ thought He was
 - Today we want to counter by observing the deity of Christ by His relationships

Christ's Relationship*with the apostles*

- The twelve apostles (Lk. 22:24-27)
 - How is Jesus' relationship to the twelve?
 - He is not merely a "part" of the group, but the organizer, the founder, the head of it
 - Similar to the founding of the twelve tribes of Israel in the Old Testament
 - The fact that He is over the apostles is significant in understanding Jesus' self-identity

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"Jesus answered and said to him, 'blessed are you, Simon Bar-Jonah, for flesh and blood has not revealed this to you, but my Father who is in heaven.'"

Matthew 18:17

Christ's Relationship with John the Baptist

- John the Baptist
 - ▣ "For I say to you, among those born of women there is not a greater prophet than John the Baptist; but he who is least in the kingdom of God is greater than he" (Lk. 7:28)
 - If Jesus were merely a prophet, He would have been less than John
 - Yet, even being least in the Lord's kingdom is greater than John
 - This statement about the "kingdom of God" would have been very profound to His listeners
 - ▢ The normal view was that Israel was the kingdom of God (Acts 1:6)
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Christ's Relationship to the kingdom

- The kingdom
 - ▣ The giver of the keys of the kingdom (Mat. 16:19)
 - ▣ The possessor of the kingdom... "My kingdom" (Lk. 22:28-30)
 - Only Jesus can bestow the kingdom
 - Jesus is king!
 - Compare: "conveyed us into the kingdom of the Son of His love" (Col. 1:13) and "And He is the head of the body, the church, who is the beginning, the firstborn from the dead, that in all things He may have the preeminence" (Col. 1:18)

Christ's Relationship to the world

- The world
 - ▣ Commissioned disciples to go into all the world preaching to save (Mk. 16:15, 16)
 - Shows the world is lost and in need of a savior
 - Implicates that Jesus is the savior
 - "He was in the world, and the world was made through Him, and the world did not know Him" (Jn. 1:10; cf. 3:16)
 - ▣ Light of the world (Jn. 8:12)
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Christ's Relationship

to the Law

- The Law
 - Jesus spoke with authority about things pertaining to the Law
 - Jesus spoke with authority and superiority of things that went deeper than the surfaced reading of the Law
 - "but I say to you" (Matt. 5:22, 28, 32, 34, 44)
 - The Law condemned the outward action of adultery, but Jesus condemned the root of adultery as sin (Mat. 5:28)
 - What would Jesus personally gain in placing His thinking above that which was written?
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Jesus Had Power to Modify Law

- Law of Moses permitted divorce and remarriage for things less than fornication, viz., "some uncleanness" (Deut. 24:1-4)
- Law of Moses permitted both parties to remarry
 - *restricted the man from ever taking his wife back if she remarried
- Jesus set that law aside for two reasons:
 - It was given due to the hardness of man's heart
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- "But Jesus here limits the right of divorce to cases of unchastity, and if there be a divorce on any other ground, neither the man nor the woman can marry again without committing adultery. {#Mt 19:9} **Such is Jesus' modification of the Old Testament law**, and in no part of the New Testament is there any relaxation as to the law here set forth. It is implied that divorce for unchastity breaks the marriage bond, and it is therefore held almost universally, both by commentators and moralists, that the innocent party to such a divorce can marry again. Of course the guilty part could not, for no one is allowed by law to reap the benefits of his own wrong" (The Fourfold Gospel, p. 242)

How Could Jesus Teach With Such Authority If He Had An Identity Crisis?

- "And so it was, when Jesus had ended these sayings, that the people were astonished at His teaching, for He taught them as **one having authority**, and not as the scribes" (Matt. 7:28, 29)
 - He was the fulfillment of Law (Matt. 5:17)
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 - He knew His proper standing

Identity Crisis? **NO WAY!**

- “⁵ Or have you not read in the law that on the Sabbath the priests in the temple profane the Sabbath, and are blameless? ⁶ Yet I say to you that in this place there is One greater than the temple.... ⁸ For the Son of Man is Lord even of the Sabbath”
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- “⁶³ But Jesus kept silent. And the high priest answered and said to Him, ‘I put You under oath by the living God: Tell us if You are the Christ, the Son of God!’ ⁶⁴ Jesus said to him, ‘It is as you said. Nevertheless, I say to you, hereafter you will see the Son of Man sitting at the right hand of the Power, and coming on the clouds of heaven’” (Matt. 26:63, 64)

Jesus is the “END” of the Law

- “For Christ is the end of the law for righteousness to everyone who believes” (Rom. 10:4)
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Christ’s Relationship

to the roman authorities

- Those who deny Jesus’ divine authority often argue that Jesus, while not God, was a good teacher
- It begs the question that if Jesus was merely a famous sage in Israel who only taught mind-probing parables...
 - why would the Romans crucify him?
 - why the title above Him, “THE KING OF THE JEWS”?
 - Either Jesus made such a claim or others thought He did
 - See John 19:19-22; 18:33-37

The Picture of Christ's Relationships Prove
He Knew He was More than a Mere Man

- Over Apostles
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- Possessor of Kingdom
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APPROVED

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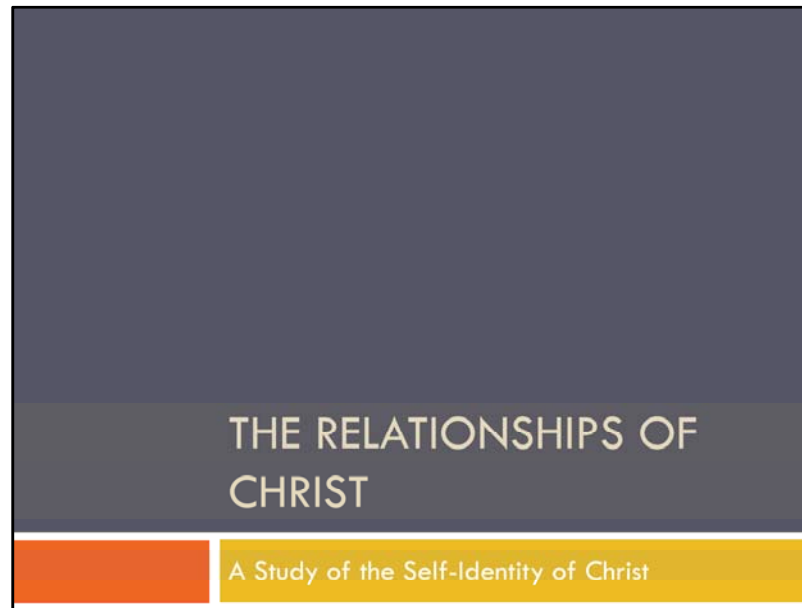
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As noted, this is *a study of the self-identity of Christ*. By that, I mean, who does Jesus believe he is? Would Jesus agree with John's assessment in John 1:1-4? Would He say, "Well said," or would he say "Say what?" Some people have advocated that Jesus didn't know or struggled with the idea of being God in the flesh and that disciples exaggerated the claims of Jesus.

If we step away from most of the claims and look at the relationships of Christ, it will show that the claims of Christ are in accordance with His relationships.

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Jesus rarely with frankness stated that He was God. He usually did and said things for people to make the connection that He was the Son of God. These suggestions were all educated guesses and while it might be complimentary for a man to be likened to one of the prophets, everyone one of these answers given by men were wrong.

Put yourself before Jesus at this time and ask yourself how you would answer. Would one of these answers come forth?

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This is a fundamental point of interest.... [CLICK thru]

24 Now there was also a dispute among them, as to which of them should be considered the greatest.

25 And He said to them, "The kings of the Gentiles exercise lordship over them, and those who exercise authority over them are called 'benefactors.'

26 "But not so among you; on the contrary, he who is greatest among you, let him be as the younger, and he who governs as he who serves.

27 "For who is greater, he who sits at the table, or he who serves? Is it not he who sits at the table? Yet I am among you as the One who serves.

Luke 22:24-27

The "Yet I am among you as the One who serves" is given to show the contrast between Jesus and His apostles. It absolutely requires that He is greater than them for the point to make sense.

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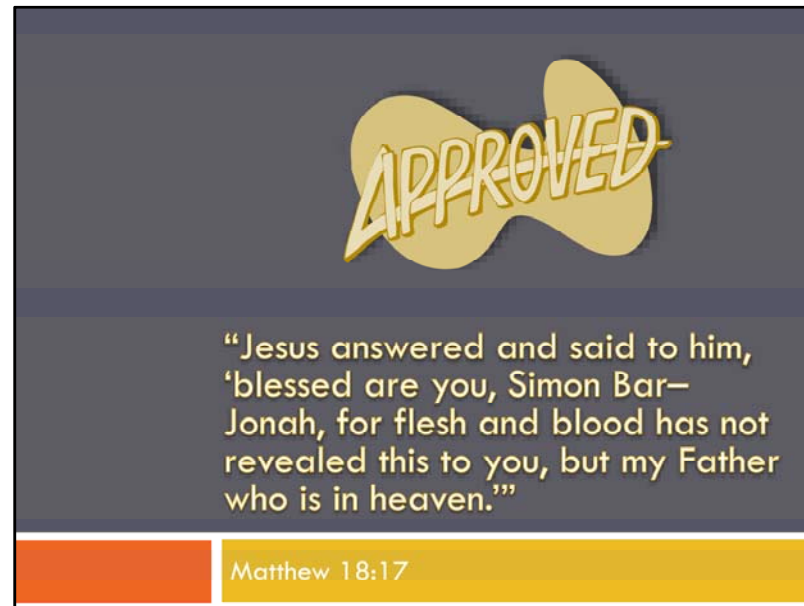
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He is asking his apostles but Peter was the first to answer. His answer is very different from what others were saying about Jesus. It is safe to say that these apostles, though perplexed at times, viewed Jesus as being greater than any of them and here, Peter explicitly exclaims that He is the Christ, the Son of the living God. What a confession!

Peter believed in the coming Messiah prophecies of the Old Testament. He believed Christ was that One who was spoken of to come. He believed that God was alive. He believed that Jesus was His Son. Did Jesus accept his confession or did He deny it?

Of course Jesus accepted it and others understood that too, "She said to Him, "Yes, Lord, I believe that You are the Christ, the Son of God, who is to come into the world."
John 11:27)



Flesh and blood did not reveal this to him, that is, man has not revealed this to Peter. It may also be that it wasn't Jesus' status among men and his lowly presence that revealed this but that the Father in heaven revealed such knowledge to Peter. That may have been a revelation given by the Spirit or it may have been a revelation by the signs and teachings that Jesus had done (consider effect of signs and preaching: Jn. 4:42; 6:14). Regardless, Jesus has no identity crisis. He is not in limbo debating who he is. He forcefully affirms that Peter's statement about Him is true and is ultimately the bedrock for which the kingdom/church will be built upon.

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Does it look like Jesus didn't know who He was. Only one greater than the temple had authority to modify and expound law like Jesus did. In fact His ministry seems to follow what was written before time, “Many people shall come and say, ‘Come, and let us go up to the mountain of the LORD, To the house of the God of Jacob; He will teach us His ways, And we shall walk in His paths...’” (Is. 2:3)

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SIDE POINT: [CLICK] Many think that “Son of God” is the equivalent of saying the Deity of Christ and saying “Son of Man” is the equivalent of saying the humanity of Christ. While “Son of Man” may implicate the Lord becoming man, it is an expression used by Jesus to identify His deity, not His humanity. Jesus is teaching and affirming His deity, even here by alluding to the Daniel 7:13, 14 prophecy of the “Son of Man.”

Jesus is the "END" of the Law

- "For Christ is the end of the law for righteousness to everyone who believes" (Rom. 10:4)
- "having abolished in His flesh the enmity, that is, the law of commandments contained in ordinances, so as to create in Himself one new man from the two, thus making peace" (Eph. 2:15)

Christ's Relationship

to the roman authorities

- Those who deny Jesus' divine authority often argue that Jesus, while not God, was a good teacher
- It begs the question that if Jesus was merely a famous sage in Israel who only taught mind-probing parables...
 - ▣ why would the Romans crucify him?
 - ▣ why the title above Him, "THE KING OF THE JEWS"??
 - Either Jesus made such a claim or others thought He did
 - See John 19:19-22; 18:33-37

The Picture of Christ's Relationships Prove He Knew He was More than a Mere Man

- Over Apostles
- Greater than John the Baptist
- Possessor of Kingdom
- Savior of the Lost World
- Power to Fulfill and Put Away the Law of Moses
- Crucified by the Romans as a King