

HOW DO JEHOVAH'S WITNESSES' TEACHINGS ABOUT CHRIST COMPARE WITH SCRIPTURES?

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Many people are confused about the Jehovah's Witnesses. People have written to ask if they are Christians or do they worship a different God? The following article may help to answer this important questions.

Jehovah's Witnesses and Christians have some things in common. For example, they share common concerns about religious apostasy, and they teach against Evolution.

Jehovah's Witnesses and Christians do, however, differ on many important doctrines. In an attempt to keep this article to a reasonable length, let us not concentrate on ALL the differences. Rather...

...let us investigate the most important issue, THE PERSON OF JESUS CHRIST.

JW's believe that Jesus Christ was a perfect man, and that He is a person distinct from God the Father. However, they also teach that before His Earthly life, Jesus was a spirit creature, Michael the archangel, who was created by God and became the Messiah at His baptism. According to Jehovah's Witnesses, Jesus is a mighty one, although not almighty as Jehovah God is. According to John 1:1 in their Bible, The New World Translation, Christ is "a god," but not "the God." They teach that Jesus "was and is and always will be beneath Jehovah" and that "Christ and God are not coequal".

Does the Bible confirm their beliefs, or does it teach the orthodox Christian concept that Christ is God? This is an extremely important question. Consider the following points:

1. The Christ of the New Testament is the Jehovah of the Old Testament.

Isaiah wrote about seeing Jehovah in Isaiah 6:1-10. In John 12:31-42, we are told that Isaiah saw Jesus' glory and spoke of Him in Exodus 34:14 we are to worship no one but Jehovah. In Hebrews 1:6 the angels worship Christ. In Isaiah 44:6 Jehovah is called the first and the last (confirmed in Revelation 1:8), but in Revelation 22:13 Christ is the first and the last. These verses demonstrate that the name "Jehovah" is used for both God the Father and of God the Son. Although they are distinct persons they are each called "Jehovah" because they each possess deity.

2. The deity of Christ is taught in Scripture.

In Matthew 1:23, Christ is called "Immanuel," which means "God with us." When Thomas touched Jesus' wounds, after the resurrection, he exclaimed, "My Lord and my God" (John 20:28). There is no basis whatsoever for saying, as some JW's say, that Thomas was referring to Christ when he said "my Lord," but was referring to God (Jehovah) when he said "my God." Instead, Thomas called Christ both his Lord and his God. And Christ did not correct him!

Colossians 2:9 clearly confirms the deity of Christ when it states that in Him “all the fullness of the divine quality dwells bodily” (New World Translation). Stephen called Jesus “Lord” (Acts 7:59,60), and we are to confess Jesus as Lord (Rom. 10:9; I Cor. 12:3). “Lord” in these verses is Kurios, which is the Greek word for Jehovah in the Septuagint, the Greek version of the Old Testament. It is evident from this that Christ the Lord (kurios) is Jehovah God.

3. Attributes of Christ show that He is God

Jesus Christ knows all things (John 1:48; 2:25; 6:64; 14:30; 21:17). He is all-powerful (Matt. 28:18; Heb. 1:3), sinless (John 8:46), eternal (Mic. 5:2), and unchanging (Heb. 13:8). Since only God possesses these attributes, Christ must be God.

4. Certain works of Christ show that He is God.

Jesus Christ has the power to forgive sins (Mark 2:5-7; Eph. 1:7), give eternal life (John 10:28; 17:2), judge the world (John 5:22, 27), and control nature (Matt. 8:26). Since only God can do these things, Christ must be God.

5. Christ received worship as God.

Jesus is worshipped by the angels (Heb. 1:6) and by man (Matt. 14:33), and yet only God is to be worshipped (Ex. 34:14). Christ Himself said that worship is due to God alone (Matt. 4:10), and yet He accepted worship. If Jesus in His pre-existent state were the archangel Michael, how could He have received worship, since angels are not allowed to receive worship (Rev. 19:10)? If Christ were not God, then worshipping Him would be idolatrous.

6. Jesus Christ is called “the mighty God” in Isaiah 9:6.

JW's have a ready answer for this verse. They explain that Christ is “the mighty god.” but not “the almighty.” They say that Christ is the mighty, never the almighty and that Jehovah is the almighty God, never the mighty. However, Jeremiah 32:18 shows that Jehovah is the mighty One. Therefore, since Christ is the mighty God (Isaiah 9:6) and Jehovah is the mighty God (Jer. 32:18), they are both God. They both possess full deity.

7. Christ is God, the Creator of all things according to Colossians 1:15-17.

JW's refer to this passage to support their teaching that Christ was created by Jehovah (for example, Let God Be True, p.35). This is based primarily on the words, “the firstborn of all creation,” in verse 15. However, if this verse was teaching that Jesus Christ is the first created being made by God, the word “first-created” would have been used of Christ, not the word “firstborn.” These are two different words in the Greek, with two different meanings. “First-created” is protoktistos, and “firstborn” is protokos. Colossians 1:15 does not use the protoktistos, “first-created.” Instead it uses protokos, which means an heir, a begotten one, the first in rank. The teaching of Colossians 1:15 is that Christ is first in rank above all creation; He is the Heir of all things. He is prior to all creation and superior over it. The JW's New World

Translation adds the word "other" four times in Colossians 1:15-17, so that the passage states that Christ created "all other things," everything except Himself. However, there is no basis for adding "other." It certainly does not occur in the Greek manuscripts. The translators of the New World Translation admit this by putting "other" in brackets. This "translation" attempts to comply with the assumption that firstborn means first-created. But, as shown, this is not the meaning of firstborn, and therefore it is also wrong to add the word "other." There is no verse in the entire Bible that states that Christ was created by Jehovah!

8. Christ claimed to be equal with God in John 10:30.

JW's believe that this verse, "I and the Father are one," means that Christ was one with God the Father in purpose and not in nature and essence. However, if that was all Christ was saying, why did the Jews want to stone Him? They themselves thought His purpose was the same as God's. Verse 33 of John 10 explains that they wanted to stone Him because of blasphemy, because He claimed to be God!

The deity of Christ is the central point of the Scriptures. It clearly teaches that Christ is God. The teachings of the Jehovah's Witness' concerning Jesus Christ clearly contradict the teachings of the Bible. Passages such as Philippians 2:5-11 tell us that Jesus Christ, who existed as God, took the bodily form of a humble servant so that He could die on the cross in our place. "Therefore also God highly exalted Him, and bestowed on Him the name which is above every name, that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, of those who are in heaven, and on earth, and under the earth, and that every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ is Lord (kurios), to the glory of God the Father."

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