

INTRODUCTION

I want to move on in our Defending The Faith Series from the topic of revelation to Christ.

Show apologetics pyramid on Power Point.

The truth of Christianity rests on the person, work and promises of Christ. Paul was committed to presenting Christ and Him crucified ... the Holy Spirit seeks to lift up the name of Christ ... we must do the same when defending the faith ... we need to point people to Christ.

There are two prominent obstacles to believing in Christ:

1. The Deity Of Christ – Is Jesus God?
2. The Resurrection Of Christ – Did Jesus Rise From The Dead?

If Jesus is God, then we need to listen to Him and believe Him. If there is sufficient evidence for His resurrection, then we have reason to believe the Gospel.

Three major views of Christ:

1. Jesus is God ... but not man
2. Jesus is a good man ... but not God ... see Him as a good teacher ...
3. Jesus is fully God and fully man

ILL: Jehovah Witnesses deny the deity of Christ. Muslims do not accept the deity of Christ.

ILL: My experience with The Forever Family.

We need to have answers to objections that challenge His divine nature.

Why is the deity of Christ important?

In order for Jesus to be fully qualified to pay for our sin, He had to be a man. Because mankind had sinned, the payment had to be made by a human being.

In order for this payment to be satisfactory to God, it must be absolutely pure. Therefore, Jesus had to be God. There is no man on earth who can meet the strict qualifications.

What is the evidence for the deity of Christ?

1. Identified as God by NT writers

John 1:3 (NKJV) ³ All things were made through Him, and without Him nothing was made that was made.

John 1:1 (NKJV) ¹ In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God.

Titus 2:13 (NKJV) ¹³ looking for the blessed hope and glorious appearing of our great God and Savior Jesus Christ,

Philippians 2:9-11 (NKJV) ⁹ Therefore God also has highly exalted Him and given Him the name which is above every name, ¹⁰ that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, of those in heaven, and of those on earth, and of those under the earth, ¹¹ and *that* every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father.

Hebrews 13:8 (NKJV) ⁸ Jesus Christ is the same yesterday, today, and forever.

2. Claims of Christ

Evidence is found in what Jesus said and how others responded to Him.

a. Give life to whomever He pleases (John 5:21)

John 5:21 (NKJV) ²¹ For as the Father raises the dead and gives life to *them*, even so the Son gives life to whom He will.

b. Equal with God (John 5:22-23, 26-29)

John 5:22-23 (NKJV) ²² For the Father judges no one, but has committed all judgment to the Son, ²³ that all should honor the Son just as they honor the Father. He who does not honor the Son does not honor the Father who sent Him.

John 5:26 (NKJV) ²⁶ For as the Father has life in Himself, so He has granted the Son to have life in Himself,

c. One with the Father (John 10:30-33; 14:7)

John 10:30-33 (NKJV) ³⁰ I and My Father are one.” ³¹ Then the Jews took up stones again to stone Him. ³² Jesus answered them, “Many good works I have shown you from My Father. For which of those works do you stone Me?” ³³ The Jews answered Him, saying, “For a good work we do not stone You, but for blasphemy, and because You, being a Man, make Yourself God.”

John 14:7 (NKJV) ⁷ “If you had known Me, you would have known My Father also; and from now on you know Him and have seen Him.”

d. Accepted and called for worship and said He should be given the same honor/reverence due the Father (Matt. 14:31-33; 28:16-17; John 5:23; Heb. 1:6)

Matthew 14:31-33 (NKJV) ³¹ And immediately Jesus stretched out His hand and caught him, and said to him, “O you of little faith, why did you doubt?” ³² And when they got into the boat, the wind ceased. ³³ Then those who were in the boat came and worshiped Him, saying, “Truly You are the Son of God.”

Matthew 28:16-18 (NKJV) ¹⁶ Then the eleven disciples went away into Galilee, to the mountain which Jesus had appointed for them. ¹⁷ When they saw Him, they worshiped Him; but some doubted. ¹⁸ And Jesus came and spoke to them, saying, “All authority has been given to Me in heaven and on earth.

John 5:22-23 (NKJV) ²² For the Father judges no one, but has committed all judgment to the Son, ²³ that all should honor the Son just as they honor the Father. He who does not honor the Son does not honor the Father who sent Him.

Hebrews 1:6 (NKJV) ⁶ But when He again brings the firstborn into the world, He says: “Let all the angels of God worship Him.”

e. Claimed to be omnipresent, omnipotent and omniscient (Matt. 28:18, 20; John 2:25; 4:18; 16:30)

Matthew 28:18-20 (NKJV) ¹⁸ And Jesus came and spoke to them, saying, “All authority has been given to Me in heaven and on earth.” ¹⁹ Go therefore and make disciples of all the nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, ²⁰ teaching them to observe all things that I have commanded you; and lo, I am with you always, even to the end of the age.” Amen.

John 2:24-25 (NKJV) ²⁴ But Jesus did not commit Himself to them, because He knew all *men*, ²⁵ and had no need that anyone should testify of man, for He knew what was in man.

John 4:17-18 (NKJV) ¹⁷ The woman answered and said, “I have no husband.” Jesus said to her, “You have well said, ‘I have no husband,’ ¹⁸ for you have had five husbands, and the one whom you now have is not your husband; in that you spoke truly.”

John 16:29-30 (NKJV) ²⁹ His disciples said to Him, “See, now You are speaking plainly, and using no figure of speech! ³⁰ Now we are sure that You know all things, and have no need that anyone should question You. By this we believe that You came forth from God.”

f. Claimed to possess the glory of God (John 17:4-5; Matt. 17:1-5; compare Isa. 42:8)

John 17:4-5 (NKJV) ⁴ I have glorified You on the earth. I have finished the work which You have given Me to do. ⁵ And now, O Father, glorify Me together with Yourself, with the glory which I had with You before the world was.

Matthew 17:1-2 (NKJV) ¹ Now after six days Jesus took Peter, James, and John his brother, led them up on a high mountain by themselves; ² and He was transfigured before them. His face shone like the sun, and His clothes became as white as the light.

Isaiah 42:8 (NKJV) ⁸ I am the LORD, that is My name; And My glory I will not give to another, Nor My praise to carved images.

g. Claimed to be the eternal “I AM” (John 8:58-59)

John 8:58-59 (NKJV) ⁵⁸ Jesus said to them, “Most assuredly, I say to you, before Abraham was, I AM.” ⁵⁹ Then they took up stones to throw at Him; but Jesus hid Himself and went out of the temple, going through the midst of them, and so passed by.

Compare Ex. 3:4

h. Claimed to be the Alpha and Omega (Rev. 1:17-18)

Good argument for Jehovah Witnesses using their Bible ...

Revelation 1:8 (NKJV) ⁸ “I am the Alpha and the Omega, the Beginning and the End,” says the Lord, “who is and who was and who is to come, the Almighty.”

ASK: Who is speaking here? They would say that the Alpha and Omega is Jehovah God.

Revelation 21:5 (NKJV) ⁵ Then He who sat on the throne said, “Behold, I make all things new.” And He said to me, “Write, for these words are true and faithful.”

Revelation 21:5-7 (NKJV) ⁵ Then He who sat on the throne said, “Behold, I make all things new.” And He said to me, “Write, for these words are true and faithful.” ⁶ And He said to me, “It is done! I am the Alpha and the Omega, the Beginning and the End. I will give of the fountain of the water of life freely to him who thirsts. ⁷ He who overcomes shall inherit all things, and I will be his God and he shall be My son.

AGAIN ASK: Who is speaking here? They would say that the Alpha and Omega is Jehovah God.

Revelation 22:12-13 (NKJV) ¹² “And behold, I am coming quickly, and My reward is with Me, to give to every one according to his work. ¹³ I am the Alpha and the Omega, the Beginning and the End, the First and the Last.”

AGAIN ASK: Who is speaking here? They would say that the Alpha and Omega is Jehovah God.

One more passage ...

Revelation 1:17-18 (NKJV) ¹⁷ And when I saw Him, I fell at His feet as dead. But He laid His right hand on me, saying to me, “Do not be afraid; I am the First and the Last. **(STOP HERE AND ASK AGAIN)** ¹⁸ I am He who lives, and was dead, and behold, I am alive forevermore. Amen. And I have the keys of Hades and of Death.

THEN ASK: When did Jehovah die? When did God die?

Jesus did die ...

3. His Sinless Life

a. *Pilate found no fault in Him (Luke 23:4)*

Luke 23:4 (NKJV) ⁴ So Pilate said to the chief priests and the crowd, "I find no fault in this Man."

b. *Thief on the cross (Luke 23:41)*

Luke 23:41 (NKJV) ⁴¹ And we indeed justly, for we receive the due reward of our deeds; but this Man has done nothing wrong."

c. *Roman soldier at crucifixion (Luke 23:47)*

Luke 23:47 (NKJV) ⁴⁷ So when the centurion saw what had happened, he glorified God, saying, "Certainly this was a righteous Man!"

d. *Judas' testimony (Matt. 27:4)*

Matthew 27:4 (NKJV) ⁴ saying, "I have sinned by betraying innocent blood." And they said, "What *is that* to us? You see *to it!*"

e. *Peter's testimony (1 Peter 2:22)*

1 Peter 2:21-22 (NKJV) ²¹ For to this you were called, because Christ also suffered for us, leaving us an example, that you should follow His steps: ²² "Who committed no sin, Nor was deceit found in His mouth";

f. *John called Jesus "righteous" (1 John 2:1; 3:7)*

1 John 2:1 (NKJV) ¹ My little children, these things I write to you, so that you may not sin. And if anyone sins, we have an Advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous.

1 John 3:7-8 (NKJV) ⁷ Little children, let no one deceive you. He who practices righteousness is righteous, just as He is righteous. ⁸ He who sins is of the devil, for the devil has sinned from the beginning. For this purpose the Son of God was manifested, that He might destroy the works of the devil.

g. *Paul said He knew no sin (2 Cor. 5:21)*

2 Corinthians 5:21 (NKJV) ²¹ For He made Him who knew no sin *to be* sin for us, that we might become the righteousness of God in Him.

h. *Hebrews says Christ was "without sin" (Heb. 4:15)*

Hebrews 4:15 (NKJV) ¹⁵ For we do not have a High Priest who cannot sympathize with our weaknesses, but was in all *points* tempted as *we are*, yet without sin.

i. *Jesus asked "which of you convicts me of sin?" (John 8:46)*

John 8:46 (NKJV) ⁴⁶ Which of you convicts Me of sin? And if I tell the truth, why do you not believe Me?

4. His Miraculous Deeds

Jesus left us proof by what He did.

He healed the sick, raised the dead, and displayed power over nature, walked ... all of which was confirmed by eyewitnesses.

Mark 2:10-12 (NKJV) ¹⁰ But that you may know that the Son of Man has power on earth to forgive sins”—He said to the paralytic, ¹¹ “I say to you, arise, take up your bed, and go to your house.” ¹² Immediately he arose, took up the bed, and went out in the presence of them all, so that all were amazed and glorified God, saying, “We never saw *anything* like this!”

John 3:1-2 (NKJV) ¹ There was a man of the Pharisees named Nicodemus, a ruler of the Jews. ² This man came to Jesus by night and said to Him, “Rabbi, we know that You are a teacher come from God; for no one can do these signs that You do unless God is with him.”

Acts 1:3 (NKJV) ³ to whom He also presented Himself alive after His suffering by many infallible proofs, being seen by them during forty days and speaking of the things pertaining to the kingdom of God.

Acts 2:22 (NKJV) ²² “Men of Israel, hear these words: Jesus of Nazareth, a Man attested by God to you by miracles, wonders, and signs which God did through Him in your midst, as you yourselves also know—

Hebrews 2:3-4 (NKJV) ³ how shall we escape if we neglect so great a salvation, which at the first began to be spoken by the Lord, and was confirmed to us by those who heard *Him*, ⁴ God also bearing witness both with signs and wonders, with various miracles, and gifts of the Holy Spirit, according to His own will?

The major difference between Jesus and Buddha, Confucious, Muhammed, and Hare Krishna is that Jesus gave us every indication through His miracles that what He said was true. No other religious leader has come close to giving mankind the kind of supernatural signs that Jesus did.

Even though the Quaran of Muslims acknowledges that prophets before Muhammed, including Jesus, did miracles to confirm their claim to speak from God, yet Muhammad refused to do the same when challenged (Sura 3:183; 17:102).

Through these miracles and wonders He gave evidence that He had the power to fulfill His promises.

5. His Fulfillment of Prophecy

Jesus fulfilled hundreds of prophecies.

If He fulfilled all these prophecies, then we have reason to believe His claims, etc.

6. His Resurrection

This proof is the crowing evidence that catapults Jesus and Christianity to the front of the line.

Only someone who has power over life and death could accomplish such a miracle.

The resurrection is of such importance that if it crumbles, all of Christianity crumbles with it.

It is so important that we are going to dedicate a couple of Sunday evenings to the resurrection.

What is the evidence for the humanity of Christ?

John 4:6 (NKJV) ⁶ Now Jacob’s well was there. Jesus therefore, being wearied from *His* journey, sat thus by the well. It was about the sixth hour.

John 4:7 (NKJV) ⁷ A woman of Samaria came to draw water. Jesus said to her, “Give Me a drink.”

John 11:34-35 (NKJV) ³⁴ And He said, “Where have you laid him?” They said to Him, “Lord, come and see.” ³⁵ Jesus wept.

Mark 4:38 (NKJV) ³⁸ But He was in the stern, asleep on a pillow. And they awoke Him and said to Him, “Teacher, do You not care that we are perishing?”

Luke 2:52 (NKJV) ⁵² And Jesus increased in wisdom and stature, and in favor with God and men.

Hebrews 4:15 (NKJV) 15 For we do not have a High Priest who cannot sympathize with our weaknesses, but was in all *points* tempted as *we are*, yet without sin.

He died on the cross (John 19, etc.)

How can Jesus be both God and man?

ANSWER: We must understand that Jesus had two different natures united in one person.

Sometimes He operated from His divine nature. Other times He operated from His human nature.

- NOT LIKE A MILK SHAKE
- NOT LIKE RAILROAD TRACKS
- LIKE A CIRCLE TOUCHING A CORNER OF A TRIANGLE

SEE PPT DIAGRAM

If someone was to ask whether Jesus became tired, we would answer ... in His humanity, yes ... in His deity, no.

Did Jesus know all things?

John 1:47-48 (NKJV) 47 Jesus saw Nathanael coming toward Him, and said of him, "Behold, an Israelite indeed, in whom is no deceit!" 48 Nathanael said to Him, "How do You know me?" Jesus answered and said to him, "Before Philip called you, when you were under the fig tree, I saw you."

Luke 2:52 (NKJV) 52 And Jesus increased in wisdom and stature, and in favor with God and men.

Some think that Jesus laid aside His divine nature when He came to earth.

This is not true. He simply took on (or added) a human nature. This is made clear in Philippians 2:5-7.

Though the word "trinity" does not appear in the Bible, the doctrine is clearly there.

John 8:58 (NKJV) ⁵⁸ Jesus said to them, "**Most assuredly, I say to you, before Abraham was, I AM.**"

John 10:30 (NKJV) ³⁰ **I and My Father are one.**"

Acts 5:3-4 (NKJV) ³ But Peter said, "Ananias, why has Satan filled your heart to lie to the Holy Spirit and keep back *part* of the price of the land for yourself? ⁴ While it remained, was it not your own? And after it was sold, was it not in your own control? Why have you conceived this thing in your heart? You have not lied to men but to God."

If the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit are God, do we have three Gods?

There are three distinct persons within one divine nature.

There is a difference between person and nature.

- PERSON is "who" we are as individuals
- NATURE is "what" we are

TRINITY - three distinct "who's" with one "what"

SEE PPT DIAGRAM

The trinity is no more contradictory than a triangle with three distinct sides ... three distinct corners ... one triangle.

It illustrates the Godhead as three united persons without separate existence. The inside represents God's divine nature (i.e. what He is).

Just as it is reasonable to believe one triangle has three sides, so also is the belief in one God with three persons.

Some have compared the trinity to an egg ... shell ... white ... yoke ... three distinct parts, but one egg.

We may not be able to fully comprehend, but we can understand to some degree.

Romans 11:33-36 (NKJV) ³³ Oh, the depth of the riches both of the wisdom and knowledge of God! How unsearchable are His judgments and His ways past finding out! ³⁴ “For who has known the mind of the LORD? Or who has become His counselor?” ³⁵ “Or who has first given to Him And it shall be repaid to him?” ³⁶ For of Him and through Him and to Him are all things, to whom be glory forever. Amen.

Does “Son of God” mean Jesus is a lesser being than the Father?

ANSWER: The son is equal to the Father in *nature*, but they are different in *position*.

The first two words – *Son of* – refer to Jesus’ position or function in relation to the Father.

His sonship was not acquired like we acquire sonship. His sonship was eternal! His position is not biological, but relational.

Proverbs 30:4 (NKJV) ⁴ Who has ascended into heaven, or descended? Who has gathered the wind in His fists? Who has bound the waters in a garment? Who has established all the ends of the earth? What *is* His name, and what *is* His Son’s name, If you know?

John 3:16 (NKJV) ¹⁶ For God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son, that whoever believes in Him should not perish but have everlasting life.

Although this word is often translated “only begotten,” such a translation is misleading, since in English it appears to express a metaphysical relationship. The word in Greek was used of an only child (a son [Luke 7:12, 9:38] or a daughter [Luke 8:42]). It was also used of something unique (only one of its kind) such as the mythological Phoenix (1 Clement 25:2). From here it passes easily to a description of Isaac (Heb 11:17 and Josephus, Antiquities, I. 222) who was not Abraham’s only son, but was one-of-a-kind because he was the child of the promise. Thus the word means “one-of-a-kind” and is reserved for Jesus in the Johannine literature of the NT. While all Christians are children of God (τέκνα θεοῦ, tekna theou), Jesus is God’s Son in a unique, one-of-a-kind sense. The word is used in this way in all its uses in the Gospel of John (1:14, 1:18, 3:16, and 3:18).¹

Colossians 1:15-16 (NKJV) ¹⁵ He is the image of the invisible God, the firstborn over all creation. ¹⁶ For by Him all things were created that are in heaven and that are on earth, visible and invisible, whether thrones or dominions or principalities or powers. All things were created through Him and for Him.

“Firstborn” denotes two things of Christ: He preceded the whole Creation, and He is Sovereign over all Creation. In the Old Testament a firstborn child had not only priority of birth but also the dignity and superiority that went with it (cf. Ex. 13:2-15; Deut. 21:17).

“Son of” can refer to “offspring of” humans, it can also be used to indicate the sameness of nature and the equality of being. That is how it is being used of Christ.

Christ is equal to the Father in deity, but lesser in function.

John 5:17-18 (NKJV) ¹⁷ But Jesus answered them, “My Father has been working until now, and I have been working.” ¹⁸ Therefore the Jews sought all the more to kill Him, because He not only broke the Sabbath, but also said that God was His Father, making Himself equal with God.

¹NET Bible notes : Study notes for the New English Translation. 1998 (electronic edition.) (Jn 3:16). Dallas, TX: Biblical Studies Press.

The Jews understood “Son of God” to mean that Jesus was claiming equality with God.

John 19:6-7 (NKJV) ⁶ Therefore, when the chief priests and officers saw Him, they cried out, saying, “Crucify *Him*, crucify *Him!*” Pilate said to them, “You take Him and crucify *Him*, for I find no fault in Him.” ⁷ The Jews answered him, “We have a law, and according to our law He ought to die, because He made Himself the Son of God.”

John 4:34 (NKJV) ³⁴ Jesus said to them, “My food is to do the will of Him who sent Me, and to finish His work.

John 6:38 (NKJV) ³⁸ For I have come down from heaven, not to do My own will, but the will of Him who sent Me.

The equality in nature and difference in function is similar to a husband and wife being the same in nature, yet having different functions within the home.

Ephesians 5:22-24 (NKJV) ²² Wives, submit to your own husbands, as to the Lord. ²³ For the husband is head of the wife, as also Christ is head of the church; and He is the Savior of the body. ²⁴ Therefore, just as the church is subject to Christ, so *let* the wives *be* to their own husbands in everything.

1 Corinthians 11:3 (NKJV) ³ But I want you to know that the head of every man is Christ, the head of woman *is* man, and the head of Christ *is* God.

CONCLUSION

Before we go on to discuss the resurrection of Christ we are going to answer some questions people might have about the deity and humanity of Christ.

How can He be both God and man?

If the Father, Son and Holy Spirit are God, do we have three Gods?

Does “Son of God” mean Jesus is a lesser being than the Father?

