

### People pray to Jesus Christ

They continued to stone Stephen while *he prayed*, “*Lord Jesus, receive my spirit!*” [ACTS 7:59](#) NET

### People obey and serve Jesus Christ

[JESUS, TO HIS DISCIPLES:] Therefore go and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit, <sup>20</sup>*teaching them to obey everything I have commanded you.*

[MATTHEW 28:19-20A](#) NET

From *James, a servant of God and of our Lord Jesus Christ.* [JAMES 1:1A](#) CEV

### Jesus Christ Is Under God’s Authority

See also: *Epilogue: God Works through Jesus Christ*, p. 96

The concept of Jesus Christ being eternally subordinate to God is a historical doctrine that is still debated by Christian scholars.

### God is both Jesus Christ’s God and his Father

‘I am ascending to my Father and your Father, to my God and your God.’ [JOHN 20:17B](#) NET

[PAUL, TO BELIEVERS:] I pray that *the God of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of glory*, may give you spiritual wisdom and revelation in your growing knowledge of him, ... [EPHESIANS 1:17](#) NET

### Jesus Christ is described as being subordinate to God

[PAUL:] *God is the head of Christ.* [1 CORINTHIANS 11:3B](#) NET

But when everything has been put under him, then *the Son himself will also become subject to the one who put everything under him, so that God may be all in all.* [1 CORINTHIANS 15:28](#) ISV

### Jesus Christ is God’s servant

[THE EARLY BELIEVERS, PRAYING TO GOD:] Stretch out your hand to heal, and grant that wonders and miracles may be performed through the name of *your holy Servant Jesus.* [ACTS 4:30](#) GNT

## CHAPTER 3

# Jesus Christ

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## I. General

The NT makes remarkable claims about aspects of Jesus Christ's being and his character. In doing so it shows Jesus Christ's nature to mirror that of God, and so points to his deity (his "God nature"). The NT also often refers to Jesus Christ's "name", making it a further concept that is important to grasp.

### Jesus Christ's Eternity

#### Jesus Christ existed in the beginning . . .

[JOHN, TO BELIEVERS:] I am writing to you, fathers, because you know *him who has existed from the beginning*. [1 JOHN 2:13A](#) GNT

Jesus Christ existed in the beginning, before all time.

#### . . . Jesus Christ was before all things

[JESUS, TO GOD:] And now, Father, glorify me at your side with *the glory I had with you before the world was created*. [JOHN 17:5](#) NET

#### Jesus Christ will be alive forever

But because *Jesus lives forever, he will never stop serving as priest*. <sup>25</sup>*So he is able always to save those who come to God through him because he always lives, asking God to help them*. [HEBREWS 7:24-25](#) NCV™

#### Jesus Christ is self-existing – he is "the life"

For as the Father has life in himself, so *he has granted the Son also to have life in himself*. [JOHN 5:26](#) ESV

Jesus said to her, "*I am the resurrection and the life*. The person who believes in me, even though he dies, will live. [JOHN 11:25](#) ISV

Descriptions of Jesus Christ as "the life" reflect the fact that he has life inherent (cf. 5:26 ↑) as part of his essential nature, and as such is self-existing. Primarily they point to Jesus Christ as the source of life – the one who gives life – as the latter part of this verse suggests.

#### Jesus Christ remains the same

*Jesus Christ is the same yesterday and today and forever!* [HEBREWS 13:8](#) NET

## Jesus Christ Is Identified with God

### Jesus Christ and the Father are one

[JESUS, PRAYING FOR BELIEVERS:] Holy Father, keep them safe by the power of your name, the name you gave me, so that they will be one, just as *you and I are one*. [JOHN 17:11B](#) NCV

This speaks of an inseparable unity, including a unity of purpose – as reflected in Jesus praying for his followers to likewise be one.

### To know or see Jesus Christ is to know or see the Father

[JESUS, TO HIS DISCIPLES:] *If you have known me, you will know my Father too. And from now on you do know him and have seen him*.<sup>8</sup> Philip said, "Lord, show us the Father, and we will be content."<sup>9</sup> Jesus replied, "Have I been with you for so long, and you have not known me, Philip? *The person who has seen me has seen the Father!* How can you say, 'Show us the Father'? [JOHN 14:7-9](#) NET

### Jesus Christ is called "God"

*Thomas replied to him [Jesus], "My Lord and my God!"* [JOHN 20:28](#) NET

### Note: There is one God, the Father – and one Lord, Jesus Christ

... yet for us there is one God, the Father, from whom are all things and for whom we exist, and one Lord, Jesus Christ, through whom are all things and through whom we exist. [1 CORINTHIANS 8:6](#) ESV

## Jesus Christ Is Treated like God Is

The fact that Christians relate to (or treat) Jesus Christ in ways in which they relate to God, reflects and supplements the teaching in the previous sections.

### Jesus Christ is worshiped

*And those in the boat worshiped him, saying, "Truly you are the Son of God."* [MATTHEW 14:33](#) ESV

The disciples worshiped Jesus as the Son of God.

## Jesus Christ Is the Son of God (II): Testimony

### God testified to Jesus Christ being his Son

After Jesus was baptized, just as he was coming up out of the water, the heavens opened and *he saw the Spirit of God descending like a dove and coming on him.* <sup>17</sup>*And a voice from heaven said, “This is my one dear Son; in him I take great delight.”* [MATTHEW 3:16-17](#) NET

### Others also testified to Jesus Christ being the Son of God

*When evil spirits saw Jesus, they fell down before him and shouted, “You are the Son of God!”* [MARK 3:11](#) NCV™

And *John gave this testimony:* “I saw the Spirit come down like a dove from heaven and stay on him. <sup>33</sup>I still did not know that he was the one, but God, who sent me to baptize with water, had said to me, ‘You will see the Spirit come down and stay on a man; he is the one who baptizes with the Holy Spirit.’ <sup>34</sup>*I have seen it,” said John, “and I tell you that he is the Son of God.”* [JOHN 1:32-34](#) GNT

### Jesus Christ’s deeds are evidence that he is the Son of God

But *these [miraculous signs] are recorded so that you may believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God,* and that by believing you may have life in his name. [JOHN 20:31](#) NET

### Other events of Jesus Christ’s incarnation are further evidence

*Then Jesus cried out again with a loud voice and gave up his spirit.* <sup>51</sup>*Just then the temple curtain was torn in two, from top to bottom. The earth shook and the rocks were split apart.* <sup>52</sup>*And tombs were opened, and the bodies of many saints who had died were raised. ...* <sup>54</sup>*Now when the centurion and those with him who were guarding Jesus saw the earthquake and what took place, they were extremely terrified and said, “Truly this one was God’s Son!”* [MATTHEW 27:50-52, 54](#) NET

It [the gospel] is about his Son, our Lord Jesus Christ: as to his humanity, he was born a descendant of David; <sup>4</sup>*as to his divine holiness, he was shown with great power to be the Son of God by being raised from death.* [ROMANS 1:3-4](#) GNT

Jesus’ resurrection is a weighty testimony to him being the Son of God.

## Jesus Christ’s Pre-Eminence

### Jesus Christ is greater than all things

*He is the image of the invisible God, the firstborn over all creation,* <sup>16</sup>*for all things in heaven and on earth were created by him – all things, whether visible or invisible, whether thrones or dominions, whether principalities or powers – all things were created through him and for him.* <sup>17</sup>*He himself is before all things and all things are held together in him.* <sup>18</sup>*He is the head of the body, the church, as well as the beginning, the firstborn from among the dead, so that he himself may become first in all things.* [COLOSSIANS 1:15-18](#) NET

### Jesus Christ has divine glory

*When the Son of Man comes in his glory and all the angels with him, then he will sit on his glorious throne.* [MATTHEW 25:31](#) NET

Note that “the Son of Man” was the title Jesus used for himself the most. It is a messianic title, but it also underlines his humanity.

### Jesus Christ has mighty, sovereign power

[PAUL, TO BELIEVERS:] But our citizenship is in heaven – and we also await a savior from there, the Lord Jesus Christ, <sup>24</sup>*who will transform these humble bodies of ours into the likeness of his glorious body by means of that power by which he is able to subject all things to himself.* [PHILIPPIANS 3:20-21](#) NET

### Jesus Christ has superlative knowledge and wisdom

[THE DISCIPLES, TO JESUS:] Now *we know that you know everything ...* [JOHN 16:30](#) NET

[JESUS, TO HIS DISCIPLES:] For *I will give you the words along with the wisdom that none of your adversaries will be able to withstand or contradict.* [LUKE 21:15](#) NET

Christ has wisdom superior to that of any adversary that we face.

### Jesus Christ is everywhere

So Jesus came down, and he is the same One who went up above all the sky. *Christ did that to fill everything with his presence.* [EPHESIANS 4:10](#) NCV™

## Jesus Christ's Character

### Jesus Christ is holy and righteous

[BELIEVERS, TO GOD:] Then they turned against *your holy Servant Jesus*, your chosen Messiah. [ACTS 4:27](#) CEV

[JOHN, TO BELIEVERS:] But if anyone does sin, we have an advocate with the Father, *Jesus Christ the righteous One*, ... [1 JOHN 2:1B](#) NET

### Jesus Christ is faithful

But *the Lord is faithful*, and he will strengthen you and protect you from the evil one. [2 THESSALONIANS 3:3](#) NET

### Jesus Christ is loving

[PAUL, TO BELIEVERS:] And I pray that you and all God's holy people will have the power to *understand the greatness of Christ's love—how wide and how long and how high and how deep that love is*. <sup>19</sup>Christ's love is greater than anyone can ever know, but I pray that you will be able to know that love. Then you can be filled with the fullness of God. [EPHESIANS 3:18-19](#) NCV™

## Jesus Christ's Name

In biblical times, a person's name represented their whole person – including their nature, authority and significance or purpose. This concept is in view in references to the "name" of a person.

### Jesus Christ's "name" signifies Jesus Christ himself

For there is no distinction between the Jew and the Greek, for the same Lord is Lord of all, who richly blesses *all who call on him*. <sup>13</sup>For everyone who calls on the name of the Lord will be saved. [ROMANS 10:12-13](#) NET

These verses illustrate that the "name" of Jesus Christ signifies or embodies Jesus Christ himself by the use of the equivalent phrases "call on him" (v. 12) and "calls on the name of the Lord" (v. 13).

*Pray for persecuted Christians*

## II. Jesus Christ and God

The claim that Jesus Christ is the Son of God is one of the most central teachings in the NT. Additionally, the NT says much that associates Christ with God. This teaching forms the basis of a large portion of what distinguishes Christianity from other religions.

### Jesus Christ Is the Son of God (I): General

#### Jesus Christ is the Son of God . . .

Therefore since we [believers] have a great high priest who has passed through the heavens, *Jesus the Son of God*, let us hold fast to our confession. [HEBREWS 4:14](#) NET

#### . . . Jesus Christ is God's only Son

*God has sent his one and only Son* into the world so that we may live through him. [1 JOHN 4:9B](#) NET

#### Jesus Christ is the image of God

... the glorious gospel of *Christ, who is the image of God*. [2 CORINTHIANS 4:4B](#) NET

The assertion that Jesus Christ is the image of God – having the nature and fullness of God (as per the following subsection) – reflects and supports the assertion that he is the Son of God.

#### Jesus Christ has the form and fullness of God

[PAUL, TO BELIEVERS:] You should have the same attitude toward one another that Christ Jesus had, <sup>6</sup>who though *he existed in the form of God* did not regard equality with God as something to be grasped, ... [PHILIPPIANS 2:5-6](#) NET

For *God was pleased to have all his fullness dwell in the Son* ... [COLOSSIANS 1:19](#) NET

The phrase "all his fullness" refers to: the fullness of God's nature (cf. GNT) – "the sum total of the divine perfection, powers, and attributes" (AMP); and/or "all of himself" (NCV; cf. CEV, NLT), meaning that God himself in all his fullness dwells in Jesus Christ.