

# Who Is Jesus? I Religion vs Truth

Fred R. Coulter

One of the things that we find is that there is great difficulty with the question: Who is Jesus? ***or*** Who was Jesus?

- Are you for *religion*?
- or*
- Are you for *Christ*?

That becomes very important because many people are *for* ‘religion,’ but how many people are really *for* Christ?

We’re going to see that it’s the heart and core of understanding Who Jesus was. Let me just say that the big problem is that *people don’t want to accept that Jesus was God* before He became human. We’re going to see that one of the factors in this doctrine is that it is a devotion to ‘religion’ rather than a devotion to God, but *they think* it is devotion to God<sub>[transcriber’s correction]</sub>.

I would have copied the definition right out of the Webster’s Dictionary, but I didn’t because it’s right in the gutter and you can’t make a good copy of it.

- What would be your definition of religion?
- What do you think religion is?
- How would you define a religion?

The human definition would be *whatever you believe!* That’s an accurate definition of ‘religion.’

In reading the Moffatt he always uses the words ‘true religion,’ because that means there can be a *false religion*. I have just finished *The Two Babylons* by Alexander Hislop and I am amazed, even though now its original writing is over a hundred years ago. He wrote his first edition in 1854.

Webster’s definition of ‘religion’:

1. Belief in a Divine or super-human power or powers to be obeyed and worshipped as the Creator(s) or ruler(s) of the universe.

That is a very broad definition which then leaves it way open. This can even include, in this definition, the worship of Satan. That then would be the *false religion vs* the *true religion*, the worship of the *true God!*

2. expression of this belief in conduct and ritual
3. Any specific system of belief, worship, conduct, etc., often involving a code of

ethics and a philosophy as the Christian religion, the Buddhist religion, etc. Loosely any system of beliefs, practices, ethical values, etc., resembling, suggestive of, or likening to such a system as humanism as his religion.

So, here it categorically calls it *humanism* ‘religion.’ That’s the biggest problem that we’re finding in the schools today—absolutely the biggest problem.

4. A state of mind or way of life expressing love for and trust in God and one’s will and effort to act according to the will of God, especially a monastic order or community...

There are a lot of monastic orders; not just Catholic, but there are Hindu, Buddhist and so forth.

5. ...as he achieved religion. Any object of conscientious regard or pursuit, i.e. cleanliness was a religion to him.
6. The practice of religious observances or rights, religious rights.

So, if you’re devoted to a ‘religion’—which you can be—it does not necessarily equate and mean that you’re devoted to God and devoted to Christ. That is a very big key. What we need to do is ask ourselves:

- Are we here for God and for Christ?
- if you are*
- What do you expect to get out of that?
  - How are you going to grow in grace and knowledge?
- or*
- Why do you have the ‘religion’ that you do?
  - Because you want to be good?
- or*
- Because God has called you?

There are a lot of people out there that want to be good. They select a church that fits them so they can be good. I read that, lo and behold, Catholicism is making a comeback.

- How does this fit into who or what was or what is Jesus?
- Was He God before He was human?
- Why did He have to become human?
- In being human, why did He not say that He was God?

***or***

- Did He say He was God?
- How does this square with the traditional belief that the Jews have that they believe in what is called *monotheism*?

The ‘religious’ belief of the Jews, has to do with what is called *the monotheism of Judaism*. That becomes very, very important.

Let’s look at some religious devotion in the Bible. Let’s see Jesus’ answer to religion in relationship to God. For some people this is going to be a little different than you think. But here’s what Jesus said about Jewish religious practices of the Jewish religionists. This is a hot, stinging, rebuking, excoriating chapter—Matt. 23—when you think about what He’s really saying to the religious Jews who were there. We’re also going to combat something else as we find in the booklet *Who Is Jesus?* by Anthony Buzzard. And a paper written by Anthony Buzzard and Charles Hunting about trying to say that Jesus was not God before He became human.

Speaking of the scribes and Pharisees, Matthew 23:5: “And they do all their works to be seen by men. They make broad their phylacteries and enlarge the borders of their garments; and they love the first place at the suppers, and the chief seats in the synagogues, and the salutations in the marketplaces, and to be called by men, ‘Rabbi, Rabbi.’ But you are not to be called Rabbi; for one is your Master, the Christ, and all of you are brethren” (vs 5-8). *Very clear!*

I think this is one of the biggest violations that has happened in ‘religion.’ *Religion* is the opposite of this: we have the pope, the ‘holy’ pope, the ‘father,’ all of this.

Verse 9: “Also, do not call *anyone* on the earth your Father; for one is your Father, Who *is* in heaven.”

I always love to hear the Catholic priest on the radio or television try and worm out of this Scripture. They’re always hit with: Why do you say this?

Verse 10: “Neither be called Master; for one is your Master, the Christ. But the greatest among you shall be your servant. And whoever will exalt himself shall be humbled...” (vs 10-12).

We’ve seen this happen. Isn’t it true? Everyone who exalts himself, somewhere along the line is going to be abased.

Sadam Hussein had exalted himself by making himself Nebuchadnezzar II. I think the punishment upon is from God. I can’t see it any

other way that you get all these nations together to do what they’re going to do, other than God Who has something in mind beyond what human beings have in mind. Time will tell!

“...and whoever will humble himself shall be exalted.... [then Jesus starts on this really tremendous rebuke of them] ...But **woe**... [the Greek is *pain, agony, wretchedness*] ...to you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites!.... [not very nice words] ...For you devour widows’ houses, and as a pretext you offer prayers of great length. Because of this, you shall receive *the greater judgment*. **Woe to you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites!** For you shut up the Kingdom of Heaven before men; for neither do you yourselves enter, nor do you allow those who are entering to enter. **Woe to you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites!** For you travel the sea and the land to make one proselyte, and when he has become one, you make him twofold more a son of Gehenna than yourselves” (vs 12-15).

***These are all ‘religious’ practices, every one of them!***

Are these people devoted to ‘religion’? *Yes!* Long prayers? *Yes!* Taking care of the widows, and by the way, taking their money. Did you hear about the minister in Berkley who held up 12-14 banks. He finally got caught and stole a total of \$50,000. What was his excuse? He didn’t say that he was serving the Lord, but he said that he had insatiable sex appetite and he spent all of the \$50,000 on prostitutes and picking up young girls and things like that. *All a pretense!* That’s why a person should not take to themselves to being a minister lightly, or for any other thing than God has called the individual for.

Verse 16: “**Woe to you, blind guides**, who say, ‘Whoever shall swear by the temple, it is not binding; but whoever shall swear by the gold of the temple, he is obligated *to fulfill* his oath.’”

*Go through and read the rest of it; it becomes more indicting all the way through!*

Verse 25: “**Woe to you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites!** For you cleanse the outside of the cup and the dish, but within you are full of extortion and excess. Blind Pharisees! First cleanse the inside of the cup and the dish, so that the outside may also become clean. **Woe to you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites!** For you are like whitened sepulchers, which indeed appear beautiful *on the outside*, but within are full of the bones of the dead, and of all uncleanness” (vs 25-27).

You go through and read that. The reason that I’m starting here is because we’re going to see in this booklet by Anthony Buzzard he quotes a

theologian that says that Jesus' thinking was entirely Jewish. *That becomes a great, grave error!* Jesus' thinking was Jewish! His thinking if anything was anti-Jewish. What was His thinking in a positive sense? *The thinking of God!* That's what His thinking was.

Now let's look at the other end. We've covered the Jews, so let's look at the Gentiles. Here are some other 'religious' things that take away from Christ; other 'religious' things that men are devoted to.

Colossians 2:2: "That their hearts may be encouraged, being knit together in love unto all riches of the full assurance of understanding, unto *the* knowledge of the mystery of God, and of *the* Father, and of Christ; in Whom are hid all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge" (vs 2-3).

We don't need to go to the teachings of men to find out about God. We need to go to God! We need to go to Christ! We need to go the Word that God has preserved for us! We need to understand that thoroughly and completely, as much as possible.

Then Paul says, v 4: "Now, this I say so that no one may deceive you by persuasive speech." *There are a lot of things in this booklet that sound really good, but are not leading to the Truth!*

- Can you take some of the Truth and create a lie? *Yes!*
- Can you take some of the Truth and misapply it and still have what you wouldn't want? *Yes!*

Analogy: What if you had every perfect ingredient that you needed to make a cake? You had the flour, salt, sugar, butter—all class A—but you had bad baking powder? You didn't know that your baking powder is kaput and you mix this all together and you make your cake. You taste-test it before you put it in the pan and put it in the oven. You put it in the oven and guess what? *It doesn't rise!* So, you have not the complete product. You may have a lot of the correct ingredients, but you don't have the cake.

It's the same way that if you do have the right baking powder, you mix it all up and put it in the oven, the oven is at exactly the right temperature and just at the wrong minute someone opens the oven door and slams it, and the cake falls! Or maybe the outside is cooked but the inside isn't and the inside falls. So, you have a damaged cake.

A lot of what we're going to cover here is like that. You can take part of the Truth and misapply it. You can take a reading into something

and misread it because of an earlier belief. This is why Paul says to not let anyone beguile you—deceive you—and trick you into believing something with enticing words.

Verse 5: "For though I am indeed absent in the flesh, yet I am with you in spirit, rejoicing and beholding your order, and the steadfastness of your faith in Christ. Therefore, as you have received Christ Jesus the Lord, be walking in Him; being rooted and built up in Him, and being confirmed in the faith, exactly as you were taught, abounding in it with thanksgiving. Be on guard so that no one takes you captive through philosophy..." (vs 5-8).

*We're going to see some philosophies as we go through this!*

"...and vain deceit, according to the traditions of men, according to the elements of the world, and not according to Christ. For in Him dwells all the fullness of the Godhead bodily" (vs 8-9).

That's an interesting statement. We'll pause here and think on that statement, for those who say that Jesus was not God. How do you answer that?

Verse 9: "For in Him dwells all the fullness of the Godhead bodily; and you are complete in Him, Who is the Head of all principality and power" (vs 9-10).

Let's see what the Apostle Peter said about 'religion,' because religion becomes this (2-Peter 1); this really strikes me, especially after having gone back through *The Two Babylons* by Alexander Hislop {[truthofgod.org](http://truthofgod.org)}.

2-Peter 1:15: "But I will make every effort *that*, after my departure, you may always have a *written* remembrance... [the Truth of God and everything] ...of these things *in order* to practice *them* for yourselves, for we did not follow cleverly concocted myths *as our authority*, when we made known to you the power and coming of our Lord Jesus Christ, but we were eyewitnesses of His magnificent glory" (vs 15-16).

We'll talk about the transfiguration on the Mt. of Transfiguration referring to Jesus and His attributes of God.

Verse 17: "Because He received glory and honor from God *the* Father when *the* voice came to Him from the Majestic Glory, 'This is My Son, the Beloved, in Whom I am well pleased.' And *this is the* voice from heaven that we heard when we were with Him on the Holy mountain. We also possess the confirmed prophetic Word to which you do well to pay attention, as to a light shining in a dark place, until the day dawns and *the* morning star arises in

your hearts; knowing this first, that no prophecy of Scripture originated as anyone's own *private* interpretation" (vs 17-20).

I think this becomes important, because we're going to have to put the Bible together *correctly*, and then what we're going to do also is see how that it has been put together *incorrectly* by making certain statements and promises without bringing the Truth.

Verse 21: "Because prophecy was not brought at any time by human will, but the Holy men of God spoke as they were moved by *the* Holy Spirit."

Look where this leads into, and haven't we been dealing with this more than ever before. It's going to be something we're going to know. We're going to have to know our Bibles and what's in it. We're going to have to know why we believe what we believe more than just because a minister said so.

2-Peter 2:1: "But there were also false prophets among the people, as indeed there will be false teachers among you, who will stealthily introduce destructive heresies, personally denying *the* Lord who bought them... [with the sacrifice of Himself for their sins] ...and bringing swift destruction upon themselves."

*They'll bring in damnable heresies!* What are damnable heresies?

- you don't have to fast on Atonement
- the 15<sup>th</sup> Passover thing
- the Pharisees were always right concerning Pentecost

As we found out, they were only right about 40% of the time. One of the greatest heresies is

- that Jesus was a created being and not God

Did you know that the Jehovah Witnesses believe that?

- Jesus did not exist until the conception in Mary's womb, ignoring a great many Scriptures

***These damnable heresies are designed to deny the Lord!***

How much can a person leave God—in the sense that they allow a lot of sin in their lives, and false beliefs—and still not be denying Christ? *I can't answer that question, I truly don't know*, because God looks upon the heart. That's a judgment that only God can make. It depends upon:

- a person's knowledge

- on how much they have known
- how much they have sought God
- on an awful lot of things
- on what they were taught

A lot of people are not capable of getting into and delving into things the way that a minister should. That's why there are ministers, but then comes a greater judgment on ministers and teachers in teaching.

Verse 2: "And many people will follow *as authoritative* their destructive ways; *and* because of them, the way of the Truth will be blasphemed. Also, through insatiable greed they will with enticing messages exploit you for gain; for whom the judgment of old is in *full* force, and their destruction is *ever* watching" (vs 2-3).

*Then he says that he's going to give them the authority of why this is true!*

Verse 4: "For if God did not spare *the* angels who sinned, but, having cast *them* into Tartarus, delivered *them* into chains of darkness to be kept for *the* judgment; and *if* God did not spare *the* ancient world, but saved Noah, *the* eighth, a preacher of righteousness, when He brought *the* Flood upon the world of *the* ungodly; and having reduced *the* cities of Sodom and Gomorrah to ashes, condemned *them* with a catastrophic *destruction*, making *them* an example for *those* who would be ungodly in the future; and *if* He personally rescued righteous Lot, who was oppressed by the lawless ones *living* in licentious conduct; (for that righteous man, dwelling among them, through seeing and hearing *their* lawless activities, was tormented day by day *in his* righteous soul)" (vs 4-8).

I think a lot of us feel this way many days during the week when we see what's going on in the world. We get frustrated because of all of this evil going on around us. Why do we get frustrated? *Because there's nothing we can do to change it!* Unfortunately, the only thing we can do is do the best we can to keep it from coming upon us. It talks about that! Then he gives one other warning:

2-Peter 3:15: "And bear in mind that the long-suffering of our Lord *is* salvation, exactly as our beloved brother Paul, according to the wisdom given to him, has also written to you; as *he has* also in all *his* epistles, speaking in them concerning these things; **in which are some things that are difficult to understand...**" (vs 15-16).

"...which the ignorant and unstable are twisting *and* *distorting*... [turn to their own use] ...as *they* also *twist and distort* the rest of the Scriptures..." (v 16)—***taking the Word of God and misapplying it and hence creating something that***

*looks like it is true, but it's not!*

They do this "...to their own destruction. Therefore, beloved, since you know this in advance, be on guard against *such practices*, lest you be led astray with the error of the lawless ones, *and* you fall from your own steadfastness; rather, be growing in *the* grace and *the* knowledge of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. To Him *be* glory both now and into *the* day of eternity. Amen" (vs 16-18). *I think that's an appropriate way to start out this series!*

I had this letter sent to me:

Received your tapes, was inspired with them....Charles Hunting sent me a copy of *Christology in the Making* by Jim Davison, but I find it quite slow going in trying to get into it. I'm not that type of a scholar.

So, he's sending it to me to see what I thought of it. It's entitled: *The Problem of the Preexistence in John in Relation to Traditional Christology: An Exegetical and Historical Examination* by Anthony Buzzard

I'm not going to burden you with a lot of technical things. I'm just going to say that I've read it all the way through. Then I received a letter after the sermon on *Was Jesus God?*

Thank you for writing me and sending the tape and video of your sermon *Was Jesus God?* I appreciate your taking the time; some would not make the effort to even in answering my letter. Would you help me just one more time as your time permits.

I'm reading this so she will know that, yes, I'm going to help her one more time. But it's taken a lot longer this time to do it, and it's going to cover a lot more than I figured.

Charles Hunting has studied this subject and read material by Greek scholars. Would you write him for me, as a favor, and explain just a few Scriptures as to why you believe Jesus was God. I'm sure he will write you back and perhaps you can come to appreciate each other's perspectives as correctly taught in the Bible. The Truth is not easy to find.

She sent me a copy of this letter written by James D. Tabor; he is on the staff of the Dept. of Religious Studies at the University of North Carolina at Charlotte. I didn't know it, but they had a conference on this very subject back east, which Dr. Dorothy attended and Robert Khun was there and Garner Ted Armstrong was there, and some other ones. He makes reference to that.

This is quite a widespread discussion in the Church today. I didn't know until talking to Mr.

Richard Burkes from Arkansas, that a lot of the Churches of God Seventh Day do not believe that Jesus was God before He became human. I didn't know that, but a lot of them, especially as a result of the writing of John Keys. I had a booklet of his that I have since not kept, but I'm going to take the first premise of their thinking from this booklet by Anthony Buzzard, *Who is Jesus?* Some of this overlaps into the trinity question.

*Who Is Jesus?* by Anthony Buzzard  
{christianmonotheism.com/media/text/WhoIsJesusBook.pdf}

It is a striking fact that Jesus never referred to Himself as "God."

That may be a *striking fact*, and we're going to find out, if that is true, why didn't He say that He was God?

Equally remarkable in the New Testament use is the use of the word "God"—in Greek *ho theos*—to refer to the Father alone, some 1325 times. In sharp contrast, Jesus is called "god" in a handful of texts only...

What is the premise that we're beginning to see right here, right now with the foundation for the thinking that they are laying? *Very important to understand that!* What are we having, which according to human logic, is true? *It is called 'the preponderance of evidence'!* This is okay in a court where someone is being tried. But *preponderance of evidence* does not necessarily make something true or untrue in the Bible.

Only a handful of text in the Bible in the New Testament refer to Jesus as God, but they are still there. So, the tactic with *preponderance of evidence* is to already set your mind to the fact that the other Scriptures by sheer weight and number undo those handful, or few, which state something.

In dealing with evidence in a court of law that could be true, but in dealing with the Scriptures that cannot be true.

#### Old Testament Monotheism Confirmed by Jesus and Paul

Readers of Scripture in the 20<sup>th</sup> century may not easily appreciate the strength of the monotheism—belief in one God—which was the first principle of all Old Testament teaching about God.

*Generally a true statement!*

The Jews were prepared to die for their conviction that the true God was a single Person. Any idea of plurality in the Godhead was rejected as **dangerous idolatry**.

I'm emphasizing certain words so that you will see that even in the writing of this, you are being psychologically prepared for their conclusion. If you believe in Jesus, that He was God before He became human, then you would be committing idolatry.

The Law and the Prophets had repeatedly insisted that only one was truly God, and no one could have envisaged "distinctions" within the Godhead once he had committed to memory texts like the following (quoted from the New American Standard Bible):

"Hear, O Israel! The LORD our God is one LORD!" (Deut. 6:4).

"Do we not all have one Father? Has not one God created us?" (Mal. 2:10).

"Before Me there was no God formed, and there will be none after Me" (Isa. 43:10).

"I am God, and there is no other" (Isa. 5:22).

"I am God, and there is no one like Me" (Isa. 46:9).

*Evidence becomes overwhelming and very weighty!*

Examples of strictly monotheistic statements can be multiplied from the Old Testament.

*I would have to say true! That is generally true!*

The important fact to observe is that Jesus, as founder of Christianity, confirmed and reinforced the Old Testament insistence that God is one. According to the records of his teaching compiled by **Matthew, Mark, and Luke**, Jesus said nothing at all to disturb belief in the absolute oneness of God. When a scribe (a theologian) quoted the famous words, "God is one, and there is none else besides him," Jesus commended him because he had "spoken intelligently" and was "not far from the kingdom of God" (Mark 12:29-34).

*Let's see how he handles John:*

In John's account of Jesus' ministry, Jesus equally confirmed the unrestricted monotheism of his Jewish heritage in words, which cannot be misunderstood. He spoke of God, his Father, as "the one who alone is God" (John 5:44) and "the only true God" (John 17:3). Throughout his recorded discourses he referred the word "God" to the Father only.

I want to ask, but I'm not going to answer it here: Why did Jesus not call Himself *God* while He was in the flesh on the earth? That is the key question—one of them, not the only—but *there is a reason*

*that He couldn't and didn't!* We'll see that that becomes important.

Not once did he ever say that he was God, a notion which would have sounded both absurd and blasphemous. Jesus' unitary monotheistic phrases in John 5:44 and 17:3 are echoes of the Old Testament view of God as one unique Person. We can easily discern the Jewish and Old Testament orthodoxy of Paul who spoke of his Christian belief in "one God, the Father" (1 Cor. 8:6) and the "one God" as distinct from the "one mediator between God and man, Messiah Jesus, himself man" (1 Tim. 2:5). For both Jesus and Paul, God was a single uncreated Being, "the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ" (Eph. 1:3). Even after Jesus had been exalted to the right hand of the Father, the Father is still, in Jesus' own words, his God (Rev. 3:12).

(go to the next track)

We may summarize our discussion so far by quoting the words of L.L. Paine, at one time Professor of Ecclesiastical History at Bangor Theological Seminary:

I want you to notice how many times all of these people prove their points by going to other theologians. That may or may not be right or wrong/good or bad, but it just shows it could be dangerous if you don't really get into it.

"The Old Testament is strictly monotheistic.

*I will tell you that that is substantially correct!* Not totally, as we will see.

God is a single personal being. The idea that a Trinity...

*We're not going to talk about a trinity, we're going to talk about a duality in our particular discussion!*

...is to be found there or even in any way shadowed forth, is an assumption that has long held sway in theology, but is utterly without foundation. The Jews, as a people, under its teachings became stern opponents of all polytheistic tendencies and they have remained unflinching monotheists to this day. On this point there is no break between the Old Testament and the New. The monotheistic tradition is continued. **Jesus was a Jew, trained by Jewish parents in the Old Testament Scriptures. His teaching was Jewish to the core;** a new Gospel indeed, but not a new theology. He declared that He came 'not to destroy the Law and the Prophets, but to fulfill' them,

and He accepted as His own belief the great text of Jewish monotheism: ‘Hear, O Israel, the Lord our God is one God.’ His proclamation concerning Himself was in line with Old Testament prophecy. He was the ‘Messiah’ of the promised Kingdom, the ‘Son of Man’ of Jewish hope...If He sometimes asked ‘Who do men say that I the Son of Man am?’ He gave no answer beyond the implied assertion of Messiahship”... (A Critical History of the Evolution of Trinitarianism, 1900, pp. 4, 5).

*A lot of truth in what is said, but also of bearing down now on Jewish things!*

1. His Father was God!
2. He was not taught in the Jewish sense!

*I believe that Jesus was taught of God the Father constantly!* He certainly was not taught of the rabbis. So, His thinking was not ‘Jewish to the core.’ ***His thinking was Godly to the core!*** That’s important to know.

The strength of Jewish feeling about monotheism is well illustrated by the following quotations: “The belief that God is made up of several personalities such as the Christian belief in the Trinity is a departure from the pure conception of the unity of God. Israel has throughout the ages rejected everything that marred or obscured the conception of pure monotheism it has given the world, and rather than admit any weakening of it, Jews are prepared to wander, to suffer, to die” (Rabbi J.H. Hertz).

- Why are they wandering, suffering and dying?
  - Because of their belief in one God only?
- or***
- Their rebellion against God and rejection of Jesus Christ?

*The latter, not the former!*

Ezra D. Gifford, in *The True God, the True Christ, and the True Holy Spirit*, says: “The Jews themselves sincerely resent the implication that their Scriptures contain any proof, or any intimation of the doctrine of the orthodox Trinity...”

I would agree with them partially, but what do you do with certain Scriptures in the Old Testament? If you have the Old Testament, do you have *all* of the teachings of God for salvation? ***NO!*** You cannot have salvation in the Old Testament without Christ. Paul told Timothy that he ‘knew the Scriptures which you’ve known from a child that are able to

make you wise unto salvation ***through Jesus Christ.***’

...and Jesus and the Jews never differed on this subject, both maintaining that God is One only, and that this is the greatest truth revealed to man.”

If we examine the recorded teachings of Jesus in Matthew, Mark, and Luke, remembering that these documents represent the understanding of the apostolic church in the 60s-80s AD, we will find not a hint that Jesus believed himself to be an uncreated being who had existed from eternity. Matthew and Luke trace the origin of Jesus to a special act of creation by God when the Messiah’s conception took place in the womb of Mary. It was this miraculous event, which marked the beginning—the genesis, or origin—of Jesus of Nazareth (Matt. 1:18, 20). Nothing at all is said of an “eternal Sonship”...

You set up a premise, but that premise may or may not be true. The fact of the matter is that Jesus was not the Son before He became the Son, which I will definitely prove in the course of this series. ***He was not the Son until He was the ‘only begotten’ of the Father.*** Very important!

...implying that Jesus had been alive as a Son before his conception. That idea was introduced into Christian circles after the New Testament documents had been completed....

***No proof!*** We will show from the Bible that John very clearly said it. Jesus Himself also alluded to it but could not say it directly. We are going to see many Scriptures in the Old Testament that allude to it, ***many!*** Let’s just take one. I want to read this because it says (in the booklet) that there is no hint of anything having to do that Jesus was an uncreated being before He was conceived in the womb of the virgin Mary. How then do you handle this Scripture:

Malachi 3:1: “Behold, I will send My messenger [John the Baptist] and he will prepare the way before Me. And the Lord [Yahweh] Whom you seek, shall suddenly come to His temple, even the Messenger of the covenant, in Whom you delight. Behold, He comes,’ says the LORD of hosts.”

What are you going to do with that one? If that does not refer to Jesus Christ as Yahweh before He became human? We’re going to see that in this thesis, though a multitude of Scriptures are quoted, they do not bring the proof, and they do not examine them thoroughly enough. They avoid them

to prove *their point*.

It's just like an historian wrote: History is the compilation of the events that are written down that are politically acceptable for that time. Which means that if you emphasize certain facts, you bear down on certain facts, you ignore certain facts so that you can bring about your desired result.

We're seeing the re-writing of American History that way, because people are *offended* that it was white Anglo-Saxon Protestants that founded this country and established the basis of it. So, they are easing off on those facts and bringing in other things that may be facts so they can suit their own premise and their own political desire. People can do that with 'religion' so they can create a doctrine. That's what is done here.

#### Whoever Said the Messiah Was God?

The crucial question we must answer is this: On what basis **did Jesus and the early church** claim that Jesus was indeed the promised Messiah?

That sounds good. Was the Apostle John writing near the end of his life—about 95<sub>A.D.</sub>—considered the 'early church'? *or* the later church? It sounds good to say 'the early church' and to say 'the apostles' but it's setting you up mentally to begin ignoring the importance of John.

The answer is plain. It was by contending that he perfectly fulfilled the role, which the Old Testament had predicted of him. It had to be demonstrated that he fit the "specifications" laid out for the Messiah in Hebrew prophecy... [true] ...Matthew, particularly, delights in quoting the Old Testament as it was fulfilled in the facts of Jesus' life and experience (Matt. 1:23; 2:6, 15).

Even though he quotes Matt. 1:23, he doesn't print it out and spell it out as you would read it. He gives it in parenthesis.

Matthew 1:23: "Behold, the virgin shall be with child and shall give birth to a son, and they shall call His name Emmanuel"; which is, being interpreted, '**God with us.**'"

I don't know what you're going to do with that statement if you say that Jesus wasn't God. How can God be with you in this child, and His name is called 'Emmanuel'—*God with us*—and not be God if it said that He is God? That's a pretty tough one to weasel around. Henceforth, it's not printed in this booklet, because that would create problems. It's only referred to.

Anything that creates a problem you avoid! Don't you do that in your own life? *The things that*

*require effort and work you avoid!* My backyard is that way right now! I don't even want to look at it. Furthermore, I know the pain and agony when February comes that I must face it. We all do that! We have the same thing here. It's avoided! Not explained!

...But Mark, Luke, and John and Peter (in the early chapters of Acts) equally insist that Jesus exactly fits the Old Testament description of the Messiah....

That He was a special human being to save the kingdom of the Jews. That's the way the Jews look at it. *NO! He didn't!* We'll look at the book of Acts in a little bit.

...Paul spent much of his ministry demonstrating from the Hebrew Scriptures that Jesus was the promised Christ (Acts 28:23). Unless Jesus' identity could be matched with the Old Testament description of him...

***I'll put in here: human King, special unique creation of God!***

...there would be no good reason to believe that his claim to Messiahship was true!

Let's look at another Scripture that has not been answered, which has not even been brought up. Since there is 'no Scripture in the New Testament that says that Jesus was the God of the Old Testament'—according to this booklet. I don't mean to be sarcastic, to be cynical, to be putting the person down, but after all we are dealing on a level that if you are going to write something, you'd better be able to prove it. If you want to get in the kitchen and do a little cooking and mixing you better be ready for the heat. What are you going to do with this Scripture?

1-Corinthians 10:1: "Now, I do not wish you to be ignorant *of this*, brethren... [the Gentile brethren and Jews at the Church of Corinth] ...that our fathers were all under the cloud, and all passed through the sea. And all were baptized unto Moses in the cloud and in the sea. And *they* all ate the same spiritual meat. And *they* all drank *of* the same spiritual drink; for they drank from *the* spiritual Rock that followed *them*. **And that Rock was Christ**" (vs 1-4).

If Christ did not exist until He was conceived in the womb of Mary, how on earth could He be called the Rock of the Old Testament and was there with the children of Israel in the wilderness and led them? *Very frail scholarship!* But a lot of people believe this! I can't get over it! I'm not mad at you; I'm upset that people would do this!

It is essential to ask, therefore, whether the Old Testament anywhere suggests that the Messiah was to be “coequal God,” a second uncreated being who abandons an eternal existence in heaven in order to become man.

*I will show by the time we are done that God had to do that, to forgive sin!*

If it does not say anything like this (and remembering that the Old Testament is concerned even with minute details about the coming Messiah) **we will have to treat as suspicious the claims of anyone saying that Jesus is both Messiah and an uncreated, second eternal Person of the Godhead**, claiming the title “God” in the full sense.

Notice the tactic: *treat it as suspicious!* When you go through, pick up all of these intimidating words that put people down.

- Why should you treat it as suspicious?
- Suspicious of what?
- What are you saying?
- Are you saying that John lied?
- Are you saying that Jesus lied?
- What are you saying if you treat it with suspicion?
- Why treat it with suspicion?
- Should you treat any Scripture with suspicion?

**OR**

- Should you open up the Bible and treat it the way that God says it should be? **And believe what God says!**

...However, the sensitive reader of Scripture will be aware that a single text should not be allowed to overthrow the Old Testament’s insistence that only one Person is truly God.

Suspicion—you cannot allow a sensitive reader—come on, give me a break! This is using New Age psychology to try and prove the point.

It should not be forgotten that the sacred oracles were committed to the Jews, none of whom thought that a divine title given to the Messianic King meant that he was a member of an eternal Godhead, now composed suddenly and mysteriously of two Persons, in contradiction of all that the heritage of Israel had stood for. The “mighty god” of Isaiah 9:6 is defined by the leading Hebrew lexicon as “divine hero, reflecting the divine majesty.”

But, brethren, that is centuries after the Jews had had a chance to re-write all of their commentary, which they did! Didn’t we read that of the Septuagint Version of the Bible, that the Jews got a hold of that and tried to eliminate every reference in there that could refer to Jesus?

I have one of the most respected theologians for the Hebrew who puts out a Hebrew text in an Interlinear and his name is Rashi. If you say anything about Rashi, anything he says, you’re right on. Well, I’m going to read to you the very interesting way that he handles Elohim in Gen. 1.

That’s how they refer to it. You can redefine anything. I want you to look up in the Encyclopedia Britannica: *Inquisition*. I want you to read what it says. Then I want you to get an *old* Encyclopedia Britannica—the 9<sup>th</sup> or 11<sup>th</sup> edition—and read about the Inquisition. In the later one only about a couple of hundred thousand people were killed because of the Inquisition. Did you know that? Where it’s documented earlier that *millions* were killed by the Inquisition?

What is my point in bringing this up? *My point is that in any lexicon you may read today is going to be doctored by the current beliefs in vogue at the time it is written!* I’ve got the 11<sup>th</sup> edition of the Encyclopedia Britannica and you ought to see what that says about certain people. The point is, I don’t care if it’s a lexicon, I don’t care if it’s a dictionary, if there is a political motivation or a theological motivation behind it, it’s going to be tainted! That’s why we have to go by the Scriptures!

In Psalm 45 the “ideal” Messianic King is addressed as “god”... [from the word Elohim] ...but there is no need whatever to assume that Jewish monotheism has therefore been compromised. The word (in this case *elohim*) was applied not only to the one God but “to divine representatives at sacred places or as reflecting divine majesty and power” (Hebrew and English Lexicon of the Old Testament by Brown, Driver, and Briggs, pp. 42, 43).

*Nice way around it!*

The Psalmist, and the writer to the Hebrews who quoted him (Heb. 1:8) were conscious of their specialized use of the word “god” to describe the Messianic King and quickly added that the Messiah’s God had granted him his royal privileges (Ps. 45:7)

*It doesn’t address the whole question.*

That King was to be born in Israel, a descendant of David, and conceived by a virgin (2 Sam. 7:13-16; Isa. 7:14; Matt.

1:23). And so, during the reign of Emperor Augustus, the Messiah arrived on the scene.

#### The Son of God:

The source of much longstanding confusion about Jesus' identity is the assumption drawn from years of traditional thinking that the title "Son of God" must mean in the Scriptures an uncreated being, the member of an eternal Godhead. That notion cannot possibly be traced to the Scriptures.

We would search in vain to find any application of this title... [the title of Son of God] ...to an uncreated being, a member of the eternal Godhead. This idea is simply absent from the biblical idea of divine Sonship."

#### John's Jewish Language

Since Jesus expressly denied that he was God in John 10:34-36, it will be most unwise to think that he contradicted himself elsewhere. John's Gospel should be examined with certain axiomatic principles firmly in mind. Jesus is distinct from "the only true God" (John 17:3).

#### Glory Before Abraham

Certainly his prayer for the glory which he had had before the world began (John 17:5)...

It's interesting how he weasels out of this. It's *'the glory which he had had before the world began'* which He had theoretically before the world began. We will see from the Greek that is not so.

...can be easily understood as the desire for the glory which had been prepared for him in the Father's plan. The glory which Jesus intended for the disciples had also been "given" (John 17:22), but they had not yet received it.

It was typical of Jewish thinking that anything of supreme importance in God's purpose—Moses, the Law, repentance, the Kingdom of God and the Messiah—had "existed" with God from eternity.

*No proof!* Even if it's in the Jewish thinking, does that make it so? Is Jewish thinking correct?

In this vein John can speak of the crucifixion having "happened" before the foundation of the world (Rev. 13:8, KJV). Peter, writing late in the first century, still knows of Jesus' "preexistence" only as an existence in the foreknowledge of God (1 Peter 1:20). His

sermons in the early chapters of Acts reflect exactly the same view.

In the thoroughly Jewish atmosphere which pervades the Gospel of John it is most natural to think that Jesus spoke in terms that were current amongst those trained in the rabbinical tradition.

*Rubbish!* None of the apostle were trained in rabbinical tradition at all. They accused apostles saying, 'how can these men speak this way, they are unlearned.' Isn't that what they said of Jesus? *Yes!*

I'm going to read some quotes from the Jews showing that they want to purify Christianity by bringing it back to Judaism, and how they have so many things going to try and do that. I'm going to emphasize these things as clearly as I can.

Genesis 1:1: "In *the* beginning **God**..." Elohim, a plural noun, meaning more than one. Elohim is also used in Exo. 20—'You shall have no other gods [plural] before Me.' The word *gods* is 'elohim.'

The reason I'm going through this so clearly is because next time we will get into Isaiah and we're going to cover an awful lot of Isaiah 40-46. We'll go through almost all of the key verses there.

Verse 1: "In *the* beginning God [Elohim] created the heavens and the earth." *Every reference to God all the way through Gen. 1 is Elohim*, with no other Hebrew word. I think that's important.

Verse 26 is one that the Jews cannot and will not and do not answer, because if they do, they have to entertain the possibility that there was more than one God. If they do that, then they must entertain the fact that Jesus was God. So, unless you can properly answer vs 26-27 you cannot say that the Old Testament is exclusively, absolutely, unequivocally monotheistic—*period!* *You cannot say that based on this verse!* It is absolutely known that this is properly translated. There is nothing wrong with this translation.

Verse 26: "And God [Elohim] said, 'Let **Us**...'—*plural pronoun*. He didn't say 'Let Me.' If there was only one God, and that was it and He was going to make man in His image, He would have said, 'Let Me make man in My image.' *But He didn't!* He said:

"... 'Let **Us** make man in **Our** image, after **Our** likeness; and let them have dominion over the fish of the sea and over the fowl of heaven and over the livestock and over all the earth and over every creeping thing that crawls upon the earth.' And God created man in His *own* image, in the image of God

He created him. He created them male and female” (vs 26-27).

Granted, it doesn’t say *Gods*, but why not use the singular ‘El’ or ‘Al’ referring to God?

Let me read to you Rashi’s on this. You’re going to see how the ‘deck has been stacked’ by later Jewish writings. We’re going to see that when we come to Gen. 2-3 something happens with the name ‘Elohim.’ Does anyone know what happens to the name Elohim? No one has asked the question why should that happen to Elohim?

Verse 26: “And God said, ‘Let Us make man in Our image, after Our likeness; and let them have dominion over the fish of the sea and over the fowl of heaven...’”

I want to read Rashi’s commentary, and you will have to note that he cannot admit that there may be more than one God. He must protect the Jewish scripture in this case from anything smacking with Jesus.

Rashi’s commentary on Gen. 1:26  
([vilmagaon.org/book/us.htm](http://vilmagaon.org/book/us.htm))

Let us make man: Even though they [the angels] did not help Him in His creation [of man] and it is in place for skeptics to disagree [with the use of the plural “us”], Scripture does not shrink from teaching us the way of the world [proper conduct] and the trait of modesty that the mighty should consult with and seek permission from the lowly. But if it [Scripture] had written: “I shall make man,” we would not learn that He was speaking with His [Heavenly court] but to Himself.

What it’s saying here is that God alone did not say ‘I will make...’ but He said ‘Let US make...’ because He’s speaking to His heavenly court. That’s a convenient way around it. *Nowhere* does it say ‘heavenly court.’ I don’t see ‘heavenly court’ there; do you? Besides, which of the angels are Elohim? Which of the angels are God? *Nowhere!*

And the rebuttal to the heretics is written next to it [the following verse] “and He created man” and it [Scripture] did not write “and they created.”

Why did God say, ‘Elohim.’ So, he can’t answer the question. Rather than looking to that God had not revealed certain things, and this is what He revealed to this point.

Here’s an interesting translation of the Bible, *The Concordant Version* of Genesis, which is a literal translation of it.

Genesis 2:4: “This is the account of the heavens and of the earth when they *were* created; in the day that the LORD God made the earth and the heavens.” All of a sudden we introduce the name ‘Yahweh Elohim.’ Why is that introduced here? Why do we have ‘Yahweh Elohim’? *It’s referring to the Elohim Who is called Yahweh!* We have in this room Davis and Davis: Ed and Bob.

So, we have Elohim—God—Who said, “Let Us make man in Our own image.” Now we’re getting down to the actual One Who is going to carry on from there. We have the LORD God, Yahweh Elohim. He’s the One Who did it. We will see that the New Testament teaches that is the One Who was Jesus Christ: Yahweh Elohim! All the way through we have the LORD God: Yahweh Elohim!

If these Scriptures were compiled by Moses—which they were—then is Moses telling us something about God that we need to know that is different from Elohim and Yahweh Elohim? *Yes, he is!* What Moses is showing is that the One Who is Yahweh is the One Who dealt with Israel, the same One Who created everything, the same One Who created Adam and Eve.

Let’s look at a couple of other names of God. When Moses asked, ‘Who will I say sent me,’ Exodus 3:14: “And God [Elohim] said to Moses, ‘**I AM THAT I AM.**’....” That’s a very interesting translation of that.

From the *Concordant Version of the Old Testament:*

Verse 14: **Then Elohim spoke to Moses: I shall come to be just as I am coming to be. And He said: Thus shall you say to the sons of Israel, I-Should-Come-to-Be, He has sent me to you.**

The Rashi Commentary: I am being what I am being and shall be.

That’s kind of a funny name, which is the definition of Yahweh. In other words, God is what God is!

Exodus 6:2: “And God spoke to Moses, and said to him, ‘I am the LORD.’.... [I am the Yahweh] ...And I appeared to Abraham, to Isaac, and to Jacob *as* [El Shaddai] God Almighty. But I was not known to them *by* My name JEHOVAH” (vs 2-3)—*Yahweh!*

This shows that the Yahweh Elohim written in the book of Genesis is what God inspired Moses to put there, to define Who He was. God has many names, and there are meanings to those names, *but it’s still God!*

Scriptures from *The Holy Bible in Its Original Order, A Faithful Version*

Scriptural References:

- 1) Matthew 23:5-16, 25-27
- 2) Colossians 2:2-10
- 3) 2 Peter 1:15-21
- 4) 2 Peter 2:1-8
- 5) 2 Peter 3:15-18
- 6) Malachi 3:1
- 7) Matthew 1:23
- 8) 1 Corinthians 10:1-4
- 9) Genesis 1:1, 26-27
- 10) Genesis 2:4
- 11) Exodus 3:14
- 12) Exodus 6:2-3

Scriptures referenced, not quoted:

- Exodus 20
- Isaiah 40-46

Also referenced:

Books:

- *The Two Babylons* by Alexander Hislop  
{[truthofgod.org](http://truthofgod.org)}
- *Christology in the Making* by Jim Davison
- *The Problem of the Preexistence in John in Relation to Traditional Christology: An Exegetical and Historical Examination* by Anthony Buzzard
- *The Concordant Version of the Bible* (pdf version at: [concordant.org/version/](http://concordant.org/version/))

Booklet: *Who Is Jesus?* by Anthony Buzzard  
{[christianmonotheism.com/media/text/WhoIsJesusBook.pdf](http://christianmonotheism.com/media/text/WhoIsJesusBook.pdf)}

Commentary: Rashi—([vlnagaon.org/book/us.htm](http://vlnagaon.org/book/us.htm))

FRC:bo  
Transcribed: 5/24/13  
Reformatted/Corrected: 2/2020